THE HISTORY OF

ROCK

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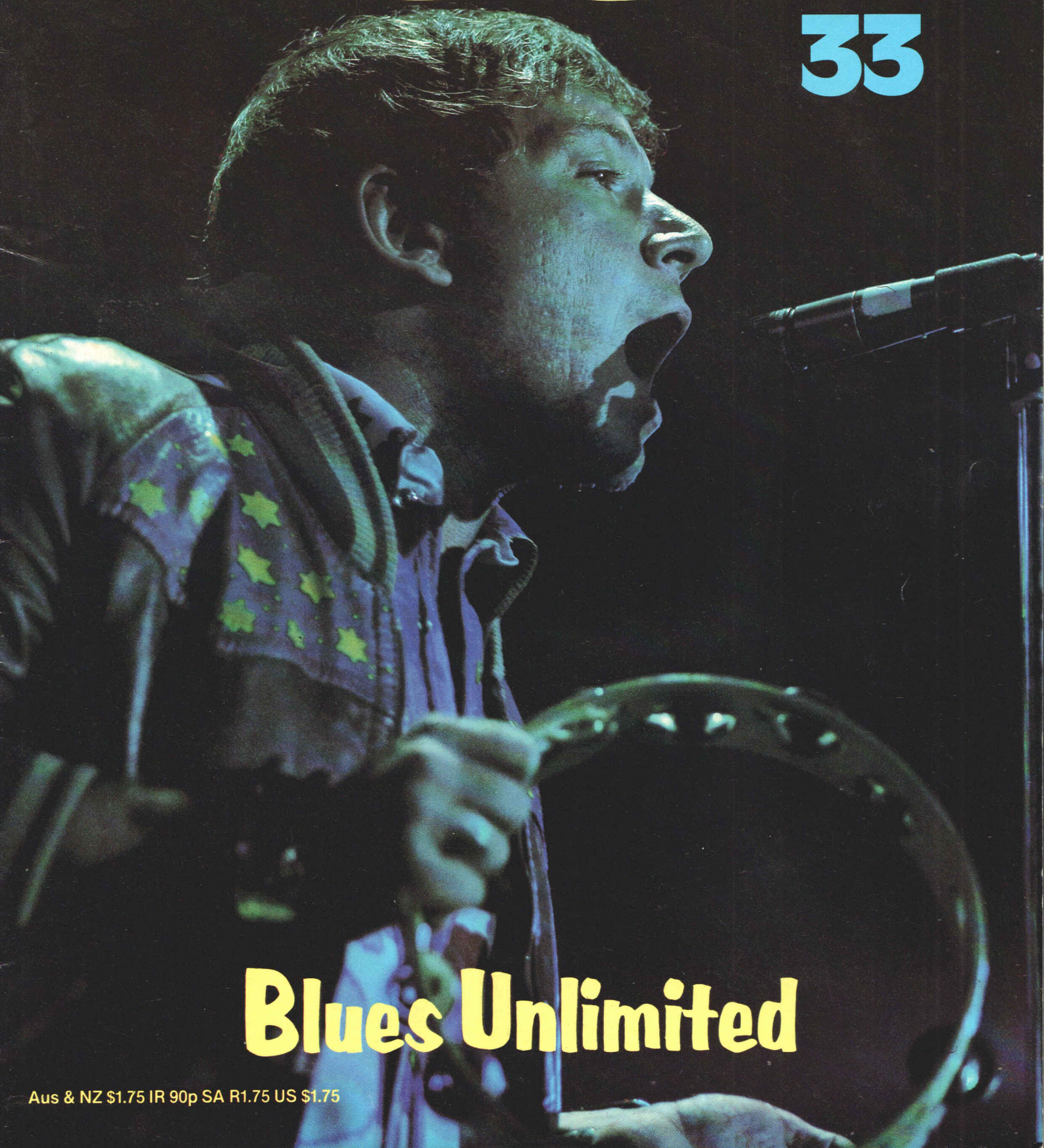

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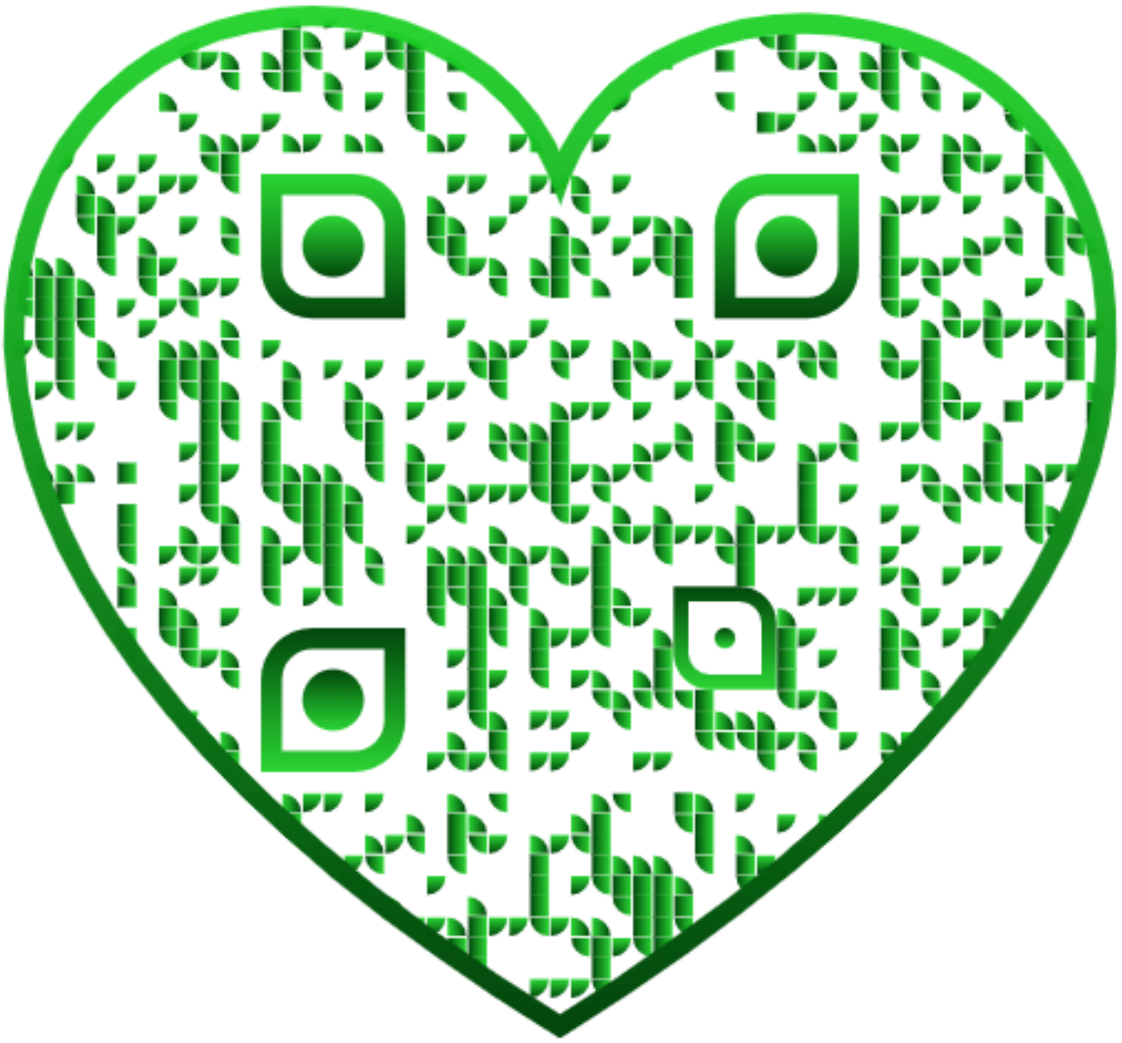

THE HISTORY OF ROCK

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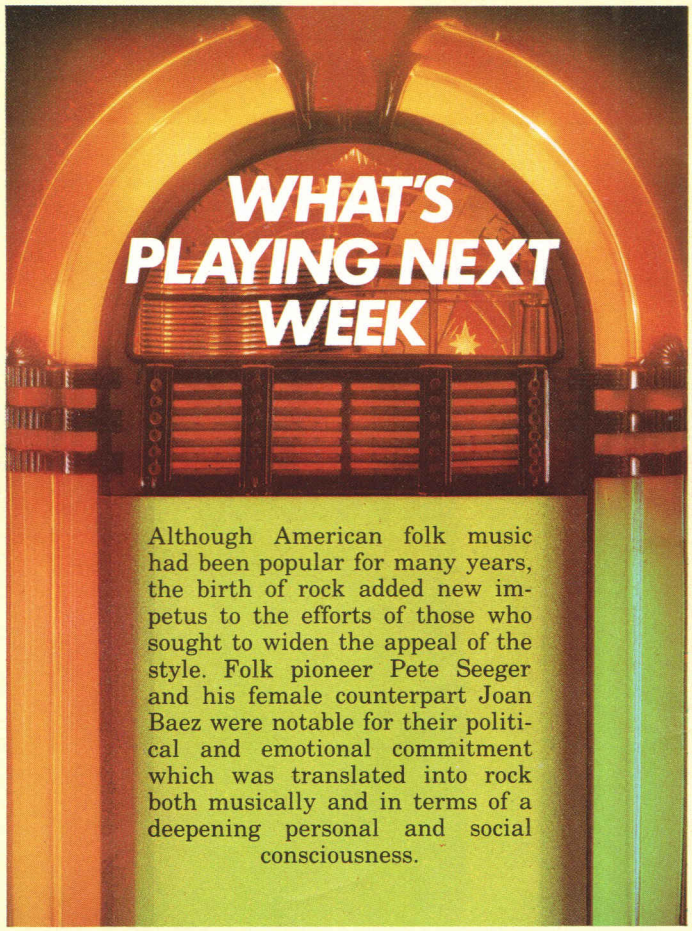

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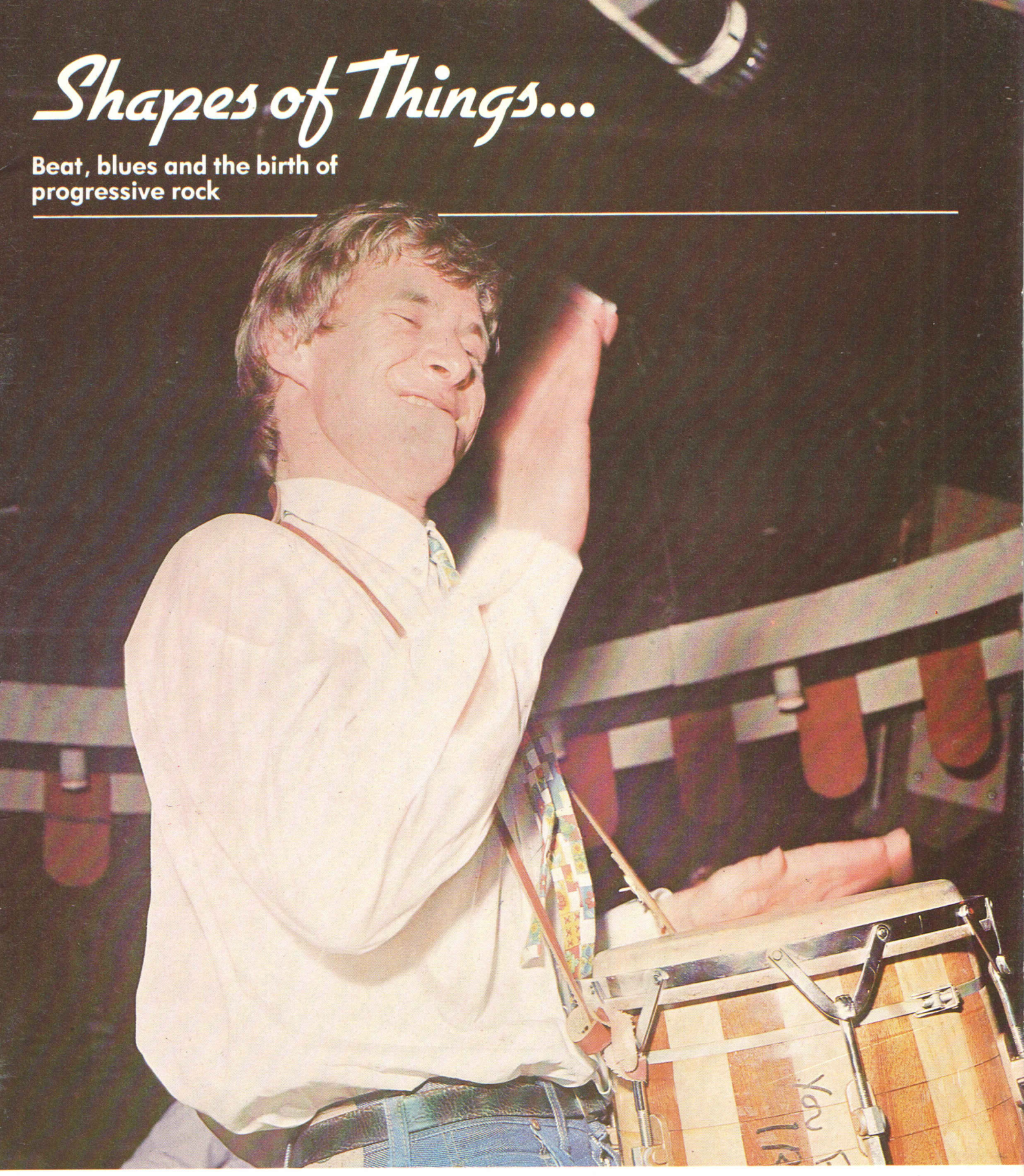
Shapes of Things...

Beat, blues and the birth of progressive rock



THE RHYTHM AND BLUES scene that grew up in and around the early Sixties was to help fuel one of the great explosions of British rock music. From humble beginnings at the ABC Club in Ealing through to West End clubs like the Marquee and the Flamingo grew the most successful and resilient phase of British beat, producing groups of the calibre of the Rolling Stones, Kinks, Who, Yardbirds, Animals and Manfred Mann.

Rhythm and blues had been popular throughout the country and small regional centres grew up in the provinces, but it was in London that the activity was centred and eventually any group that wanted to taste success was attracted to the capital. The

The big beat? Paul Jones thumps it out on a conga drum during one of Manfred Mann's club dates.

London R&B scene differed considerably from the beat music of Liverpool that caused such a sensation in 1963. Merseybeat, despite its raucous feel, was essentially pop-oriented and ultimately lacked the staying power of its London equivalent. Although in its heyday the Liverpool sound had astonished the world, by the end of 1964 it was largely a spent force, the focus of attention having moved south towards the capital.

Whereas Liverpool beat had possessed a predominantly working-class feel, the London-based scene was far more middle-class (often centred on the art colleges) and was characterised by a keen interest in black American music with a traditional blues base. While many Liverpool groups had started off doing covers of contemporary R&B plus rock'n'roll numbers, few showed the enthusiasm and awareness for blues and earlier forms of R&B that was typical of groups like the Animals or the Yardbirds.

By the early Sixties a new confidence had arisen in the British R&B movement: no longer content with slavish imitation of the American masters, a new breed of young musicians was ready to remodel the blues along their own lines. If the great American bluesmen were admired by British musicians they did not hesitate to inject their own enthusiasms and experience into the music to make British R&B a strong living force that was full of diversity.

Ability versus image

One of the most interesting features of the British scene that derived from its R&B tradition was its respect for musical ability by both audiences and performers. The musicians were seldom considered as a mere backing band for the singer – as was often the case in straight pop – but were deemed an important element of the whole musical process. As part of this tendency, a particular emphasis was placed on the electric guitar as a lead instrument – an emphasis that laid the foundation for the guitar heroes of the late Sixties. Three of the most famous guitarists in rock – Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page – all played in the Yardbirds, for example.

Again in contrast to the Liverpool scene, the London-based R&B musicians showed little regard for the smart pop image of the day. On the contrary, several groups dressed in as scruffy a manner as was possible; rebelling against the traditions of the pop world, they deliberately adopted an anti-image that ran counter to conventional expectations.

While only a handful of groups made a lasting impression in the musical world, there was a whole undercurrent of less successful acts which formed a breeding-ground for talent. Many British rock musicians who were to find fame and fortune in the Seventies had served their apprenticeship in British R&B groups of the mid Sixties. The groups led by Alexis Korner and by John Mayall in particular were famous for the musicians who had served in their ranks before going on to success in the world of progressive rock. But they were only two of the better-known examples: Jack Bruce, Ginger Baker, Jon Hiseman and John McLaughlin all passed through the Graham Bond Organisation; Albert Lee and Carl Palmer played in Chris Farlowe's band, the Thunderbirds; Peter Green had played with Rod Stewart in Shotgun Express before teaming up with Mick Fleetwood (of the Cheynes) to form Fleetwood Mac.

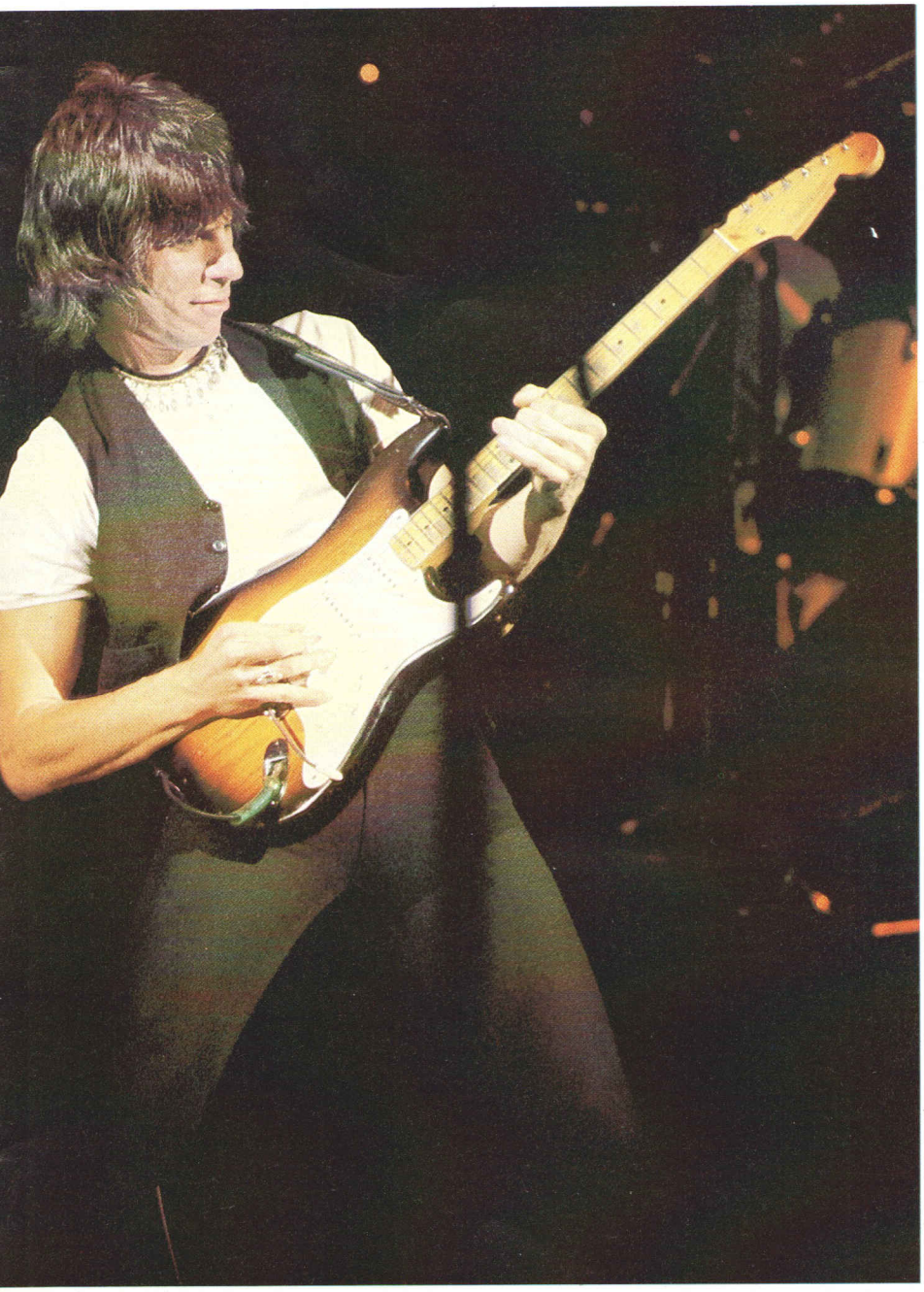
Three groups who were representative of what was best in British R&B in the mid Sixties were the Yardbirds, the Animals and Manfred Mann. They varied considerably in sound and style, but all shared a similarity of outlook and background, and they were to face the same sort of problems that beset British groups of the period.

The Yardbirds were a typical London group who made their way up through the club scene – they replaced the Rolling Stones at the Crawdaddy Club in Richmond before going on to become regulars at the Marquee. The group had grown up with rhythm and blues and had a deep sympathy for the music which led to their backing American R&B stars like Sonny Boy Williamson. Originating in Newcastle,

Right: Chas Chandler, bass player of the Animals, with Jimi Hendrix, whom he brought to Britain. Inset bottom: The Graham Bond Organisation comprised, from left, Ginger Baker and Jack Bruce (both later of Cream), Bond and Dick Heckstall-Smith (later of Colosseum). Inset below: Led Zeppelin (from left, Robert Plant, Jimmy Page, John Paul Jones and John Bonham) was formed by Page to replace the disbanded Yardbirds. Below: Jeff Beck, who left the Yardbirds in stormy circumstances, pictured on stage in the Seventies.

the Animals travelled down to London to secure more work and a recording contract; they too shared the Yardbirds' enthusiasm for rhythm and blues. Relying to a large extent on the talents of Eric Burdon as a tough blues vocalist and Alan Price as a talented organist and arranger, the Animals seemed to many to personify British rhythm and blues. Manfred Mann, for their part, were a little different. While vocalist Paul Jones was an ardent R&B fan, Mann himself had a jazz and classical background and, although he was won over to R&B in the early Sixties, a jazz feel pervaded both his own playing and that of the rest of the group.

All three groups had built up a solid reputation on the club circuit and, by the end of 1963, the record companies were showing a great deal of interest in them following the success of the Rolling Stones. In the following 18 months they were able to transform local recognition into international chart success. But this fame was achieved – somewhat ironically – through turning away from rhythm and blues to other musical forms. The Animals had their massive hit with 'House Of The Rising Sun', a deft arrangement by Alan Price of an American folk song that had previously been recorded by Bob Dylan; Manfred Mann had their first hit with a catchy pop-oriented song '5-4-3-2-1'; and the Yardbirds had their big break with 'For Your Love', penned by British pop songwriter Graham Gouldman. While the Animals subsequently followed up with the R&B flavoured 'I'm Crying' and 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood', it was – in general – the catchy pop-based tune that kept all three groups in the charts; R&B numbers were left to albums or EPs, which seldom seemed to sell as well as expected due to the differing styles contained therein.



Charts and compromise

This division between commercial success at the expense of the groups' roots caused a great deal of friction. The Yardbirds' star musician, guitarist Eric Clapton, left the group in protest after 'For Your Love', feeling that they had sold out. While the Animals' Alan Price was usually prepared to accept the commercial decisions of producer Mickie Most, Eric Burdon and guitarist Hilton Valentine were less than enthusiastic and a growing rift over musical policy in the band developed. In the case of Manfred Mann the conflict was less that of R&B against pop but more of 'serious musicians' being caught up in and compromised by pop success. This problem of reconciling hit-single success against musical integrity was increased by all three groups' failure to write effective material of their own. Whereas groups like the Rolling Stones, the Who and the Kinks had successful songwriters who could provide musical development within the group, the Animals, the Yardbirds and Manfred Mann were reliant on outsiders to provide their songs. Consequently they had less control over their output and were, to varying degrees, at the mercy of the record industry.

Towards the end of the Sixties the three groups were beginning to lose cohesion; key members had left and the conflicts over musical direction were increasing. More importantly they were overtaken as leaders in the music world – other groups were now making the headlines in their place. The advent of 'progressive' rock in the late Sixties made it possible for musicians to escape the limitations of pop and yet be commercially and critically successful. The split between pop and rock became increasingly apparent: rock bands released albums, indulging their musical interest as they saw fit, while pop groups released singles written and performed with commercial considerations in mind. The Animals, Yardbirds and Manfred Mann had arrived too early to exploit the possibilities of 'progressive' rock and by the late Sixties began to appear old-fashioned as bands like Cream and Pink Floyd gained the public's attention. Despite their failure to achieve long-lasting success, the Animals, Yardbirds and Manfred Mann achieved much in a short space of time, producing numerous hit singles that today have lost none of their impact.

ADRIAN GILBERT

MANN MADE HITS

How a purist jazzman scored in the pop charts

THOUGH ONE OF THE MOST PROLIFIC hit-making teams of the Sixties, Manfred Mann nevertheless stood aloof from the majority of their chart contemporaries. During their most fruitful period, they enjoyed presenting themselves as a semi-intellectual group of serious and sophisticated musicians who deemed thoughts of the hit parade beneath their dignity. Although they chased irreconcilable objectives – notching up one hit record after another, while simultaneously affecting to despise the whole commercialisation process – they did so with verve and success for some considerable time. Cynics might have observed that the group was getting the best of both worlds: credibility and money in the bank. In the end, however, it was these same contradictory forces that brought about the band's demise.

It was Manfred Mann himself, an earnest student of music who had been educated at both the Juilliard in New York and the Vienna State Academy, who was most supercilious about popular acclaim. Born Michael Lubowitz in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 21 October 1940, he had arrived in England in 1962. That summer he met Mike Hugg when both played a summer season as members of the same jazz quartet at a Butlin's holiday camp. Mann exchanged piano for organ and Hugg vibes for drums; together they formed the Mann-Hugg Blues Brothers, recruiting bassist Dave Richmond and guitarist Mike Vickers, who doubled on saxophone. Vickers was a civil servant, while Hugg was a trainee jeweller.

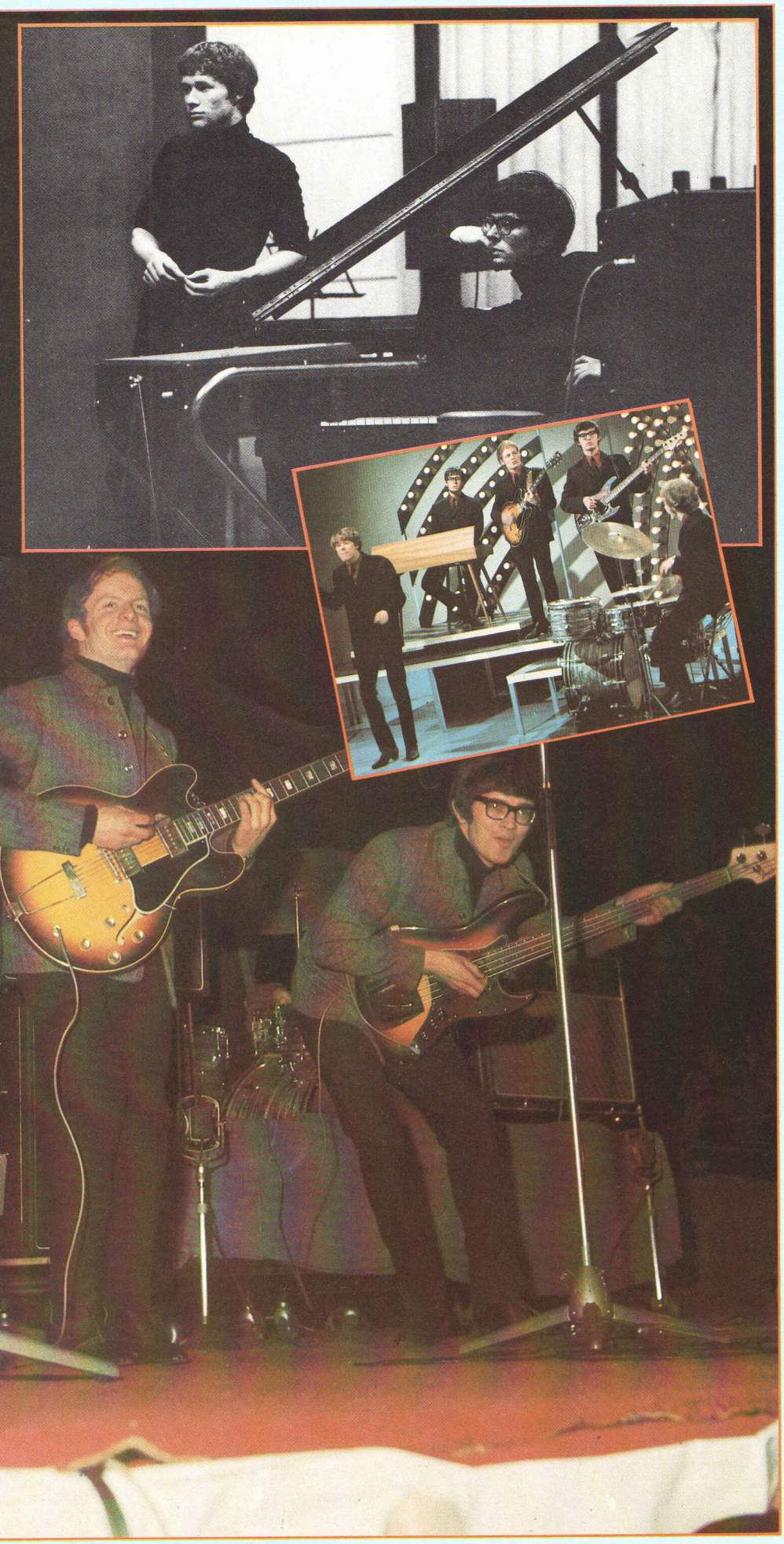
Students of the blues

Though their fondness for jazz was undiminished, they began playing more in the increasingly-fashionable R&B style, and the arrival of Oxford undergraduate Paul Jones (born Paul Pond in Portsmouth on 24 February 1942) as vocalist and harmonica-player confirmed this shift in direction. The group quickly established themselves on London's R&B circuit. They frequently had the advantage of deputising for already-popular groups like the Rolling Stones, then just beginning to move on to bigger things, and did not suffer in comparison. A lengthy Monday-night residency commenced at the Marquee (then in its original locale in Oxford Street), a record contract with the HMV label was quickly sealed and their unwieldy name was dropped in favour of plain Manfred Mann. The change was not without significance and the new name was both intriguing and unusual.

Like the Beatles and all other groups signed to EMI, Manfred Mann were able to derive great benefit from the company's policy of assigning groups to particular producers. The Manfreds were assigned to John Burgess, whose first major chart act had been Adam Faith. The association was, by any standards, successful and Burgess continued to produce the band after he had left EMI to set up the independent production company AIR together with George Martin.

The arrival of Jones notwithstanding, the group's debut single was an instrumental, 'Why Should We Not?'. The importance of the release should not be underestimated, despite its failure to chart, for a particular section of the record-buying public henceforth earmarked Manfred Mann as a band of unusual and distinctive qualities. Everything about them seemed different, from the name to the jazzy music, in which Manfred's organ lines led the way; the sound was subdued, and not a little seductive. The Manfreds were on their way, and their schedule soon became an even more demanding one. One result of this was that Jones' university career was abruptly ended; he was sent down from Oxford, a slice of fortune that he later described to *New Musical Express* as 'the biggest break of my career'.

The second single, 'Cock-A-Hoop', lent more heavily on Jones' contributions, both on vocals and harmonica, and began the process of channelling the quintet's educated musicianship in a popular direction. In line with this emerging awareness of commercial factors, Dave Richmond was sacked and replaced by Tom McGuinness. Richmond's failings, apparently, had been



merely tonsorial; it was felt that the presence of a balding bass-player would inhibit the band's teenage appeal. Despite this blow to his pride, Richmond's qualities as a musician were still sufficiently well-regarded 10 years later for Elton John to employ him on a number of recording sessions.

As a replacement, though, insurance clerk Tom McGuinness was ideal. While he too approached his music in an earnest and intelligent manner, he brought to the group a pop sensibility which Jones alone had previously displayed. McGuinness had also developed important contacts on the R&B scene. While the Manfreds had been gigging energetically throughout 1963, he had been working just as hard with the Roosters, a band originally formed in Oxford by Paul Jones and his namesake Brian, later a Rolling Stone. McGuinness could also claim the distinction of having asked Eric Clapton to join the group. When the Roosters disintegrated in September 1963, he and Clapton played briefly together in Casey Jones and the Engineers before McGuinness heeded the Manfreds' call.

Chart countdown

Like 'Why Should We Not?', 'Cock-A-Hoop' failed to enter the charts. Nevertheless, it again succeeded in its secondary function of gaining valuable promotion for the band. In this context, a television appearance on the popular and influential 'Ready Steady Go' programme was particularly important, since the show's production team formed such a high opinion of the band that they asked them to compose the programme's next theme tune.

The resulting song, '5-4-3-2-1', was written by Jones, Mann and Hugg and became a hit before it was ever heard on the programme. Nevertheless, the promotional value of the show was such that the single was boosted to the Number 5 position, and in years to come the group undoubtedly benefited from having been associated with such a fondly-remembered programme. The follow-up single, 'Hubble Bubble Toil And Trouble', was likewise used over the opening credits of the show.

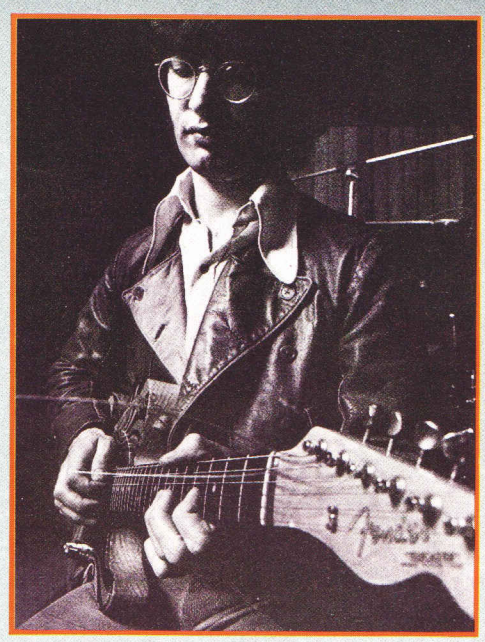
Thus, from the start of 1964 the group were established as one of the leading acts of the day; indeed, they had even beaten the Rolling Stones, whose shoes they had once filled, to the Top Five. It quickly became clear, however, that Manfred Mann wished to dissociate themselves from other chart acts, appearing earnest, studious and disdainful of popular success. Asked to name their influences, they referred not only to Chuck Berry and John

Left: Jones, Vickers and McGuinness in April 1964. Inset top left: An early publicity poster for the Mann-Hugg Blues Brothers. Inset top: Jones and Mann in the studio. Inset above: Besuited for the television cameras.

Lee Hooker, who were liberally quoted in the same context by other groups, but also to jazz saxophonist Roland Kirk, who certainly wasn't.

Versatile talent

After making their first UK nationwide tour supporting the Crystals the group released their debut album, *The Five Faces of Manfred Mann*. As the title suggested, the record was designed to showcase the Manfreds' versatility; nevertheless the R&B influences were clearly highlighted in the inclusion of cover versions of Howlin' Wolf's 'Smokestack Lightning' and Muddy Waters' 'Hoochie-Coochie Man', numbers that proved enduringly popular amongst London's R&B/mod fraternity. Jazz influences were noticeable in the instrumentation as much as is the material; Mann's own keyboard lines were prominent, combining with Vickers' flute and saxophone and Hugg's vibes to present the group as a departure from the then-standard two guitars-bass-drums line-up.



The album also contained worthwhile original material such as the Mann-Jones composition 'I'm Your Kingpin', and served the purpose of giving the band breadth of audience appeal. The song which gave them depth of audience appeal was 'Do Wah Diddy Diddy', a cover of the Exciters' US original with Jones' vocals notably forceful. The group's fifth single, it reached Number 1 in the UK in August 1964 and subsequently emulated the achievement in the US Hot Hundred – the ultimate proof, perhaps, of fast-improving UK production standards.

Hit singles came relatively easily after that. 'Sha La La' reached Number 3 in the UK and Number 12 in the US charts later that year, and early in 1965 'Come Tomorrow' became another UK Top Five hit. By then, however, the group were itching to

escape from the big hit single routine into what they considered to be a more rarefied musical climate, and they did so by releasing an EP, *The One In The Middle*.

Manfreds meet Dylan

The success of recordings cannot be measured in chart impact alone, as this EP proved. Although not a major chart hit, it met with a favourable response which lasted months rather than weeks and helped revive both the band's own faith in their abilities to handle more serious material within a commercial framework and their semi-intellectual appeal. The EP contained a version of Bob Dylan's 'With God On Our Side' and, although the arrangement seemed too rushed for a song of such pretensions, the recording marked the inauguration of the band's special relationship with the Dylan catalogue. The record company soon capitalised on this by issuing 'If You Gotta Go, Go Now' as a single, which reached Number 2 in October 1965. Later covers were to include 'Just Like A Woman' and 'The Mighty Quinn'. Dylan himself once averred that, of all the multifarious cover versions of his material, the Manfreds' were generally the most satisfactory.

The One In The Middle had also included a version of jazz pianist Herbie Hancock's 'Watermelon Man', and the title song was a tongue-in-cheek composition by Jones about the group itself. The record proved such a noteworthy release that the band released a follow-up EP later in the year, *No Living Without Loving*. This again served to emphasise the range of the band – there was a version of Ray Charles' 'Let's Go Get Stoned' – but to less effect. Both this release, and the group's second album, *Mann Made*, suffered from the same problem: the increasing sophistication of their audience.

During the two years of the Manfreds' success, a part of the UK rock audience had undergone a rapid process of education and, no less than the groups themselves, were beginning to look for edification to the R&B and jazz masters. To such an audience it began to seem that Manfred Mann were purveying too many lacklustre cover versions. While the Beatles had inspired many groups to create their own material, the Manfreds' own work contained few original pieces. Thus, although they were able to retain their wide general appeal with their pop singles, the more discerning and specialised audience that they had taken such pains to cultivate, gradually began to lose interest in them.

Manfred Mann were simultaneously hit by what proved to be the first of two personnel changes. In November 1965 Mike Vickers left to concentrate on solo projects; he began working on film and orchestral scores, and also on television commercials. McGuinness moved to lead guitar and Jack Bruce, from the Graham Bond Organisation, came in on bass. Thus

Bass player Klaus Voormann (opposite) joined in 1966, with Tom McGuinness (opposite below) switching to guitar. A more crucial change was when Mike d'Abo (above right) replaced Paul Jones (above).

the changes did not seem particularly crippling, but the group had lost some of their instrumental versatility. The new line-up was together barely a few months, just long enough to record 'Pretty Flamingo', another Number 1, before a more fundamental change occurred. Paul Jones adopted the course of action that the press had rumoured for months beforehand and went solo.

Hits and splits

By this time, Jones had become the group's central personality in the public eye – inevitably so, since he was the lead singer, and both his vocal and harmonica contributions were exceptional. His departure was, however, to weaken both his own career and that of the group. He had two UK Top Five hits of his own, 'High Time' and 'I've Been A Bad Bad Boy', and took a starring role in Peter Watkins' film *Privilege*, but was to achieve little thereafter until he reappeared with the Blues Band a decade later. Equally, the Manfreds now lost much of the charm that had originally endeared them to a wide public.

Bruce left at the same time as Jones, taking up a propitious invitation to join Cream. He was replaced by Klaus Voormann, who had achieved minimal fame as one-third of Paddy, Klaus and Gibson, but maximum kudos as an early companion of the Beatles (and, later that year, as designer of the *Revolver* LP sleeve). Jones himself was replaced by Mike d'Abo from the Band of Angels, whose close vocal and physical resemblance to his predecessor undoubtedly helped secure his engagement. There were two further changes at this juncture: Manfred introduced a short-lived brass section of Henry Lowther and Lyn Dobson; and, more fatefully, the band switched record companies to Fontana.

From then on, Manfred Mann survived purely as a hit singles act. Their claims to be treated as more serious musicians, undermined initially by their inability to create a body of material of their own, were destroyed completely by the emergence of a new breed of group – typified by Cream, Pink Floyd and Traffic – which preferred to be judged on the virtues of their albums rather than chasing singles success. In comparison with such acts, Manfred Mann seemed hopelessly compromised.

Nevertheless, the hits continued uninterrupted, the only major change being that the group increasingly looked for material from their own side of the Atlantic. Songs were drawn from top British songwriters of the day such as Tony Hazzard ('Ha Ha Said The Clown' and 'Fox On The Run'), and John Carter and Geoff Stevens, whose 'Semi-Detached Suburban Mr. James' had its original lyric referring to a 'Mr. Jones' changed for fear of offending his lately-departed namesake. The major exception to this pattern was Dylan's 'The Mighty Quinn', easily the most accomplished single recorded during the group's association with Fontana and a UK Number 1 in 1968. It was also their second biggest US hit, peaking at Number 10 in *Billboard's* Hot Hundred.

Likely songwriters

It was perhaps strange that their own lack of a resident songwriting team should have continued to dog them, for two of the group were able to point to particular accomplishments in this field. Mike Hugg had co-written 'Your A Better Man Than I', the memorable B-side of the Yardbirds' 'Shapes Of Things' (1966). He also composed an absorbing and creditable score for Peter Collinson's *Up The Junction* (1968) and in 1972 contributed the theme music to the BBC-TV series 'Whatever Happened To The Likely Lads'. Meanwhile, Mike d'Abo's composition 'The Handbags And The Gladrags' gradually achieved distinction through versions by Chris Farlowe and Rod Stewart.

During 1968, however, the morale of Manfred Mann collapsed. The group were neither the first nor the last to imagine that their talents were wasted in the hit parade arena, but by the end Mann's own protestations that the production of a stream of hit singles was a facile and demeaning occupation made him seem a pompous bore. After all, it is for their hit singles that the group will be remembered, as the huge success of the 1979 compilation album, *Semi-Detached Suburban,* demonstrated. What happened was that the band's – or more precisely, Mann's own – beliefs became self-fulfilling. They thought hit singles were effortless, disposable product and so that, by the end, is what they had become.

At the start of 1969, Mann and Hugg began playing dates with an alternative ensemble, a jazz-rock outfit called Emanon (no name spelled backwards). This became a fully-fledged undertaking in June 1969 when Manfred Mann officially disbanded with their fifteenth UK hit, 'Ragamuffin Man', still high in the charts. McGuinness teamed with former John Mayall drummer Hughie Flint, and the resulting McGuinness Flint ensemble had two UK hits, 'When I'm Dead And Gone' (1970) and 'Malt And Barley Blues' (1971). D'Abo went solo and continued his

songwriting, while Klaus Voormann retained his Beatles association as bassist with John Lennon's Plastic Ono Band.

Emanon, which incorporated a full brass section, and which had been financed through a number of successful television commercials written by Mann and Hugg, was properly christened Manfred Mann Chapter Three. It achieved none of its expected success, however, and the venture was dissolved two years later. Mann went on to form Manfred Mann's Earth Band in late 1971, hoping to incorporate jazz and classical influences into a heavy rock framework. Interestingly, Mann achieved a parallel success to his Dylan covers by plundering the songbook of Bruce Springsteen. 'Blinded By The Light' was a US Number 1 in 1978, with 'Spirits In The Night' and 'For You' also receiving the Mann treatment as later releases. Consistent album success eluded him, however, and this band – like the original one – ironically remains best-remembered for its hit singles.

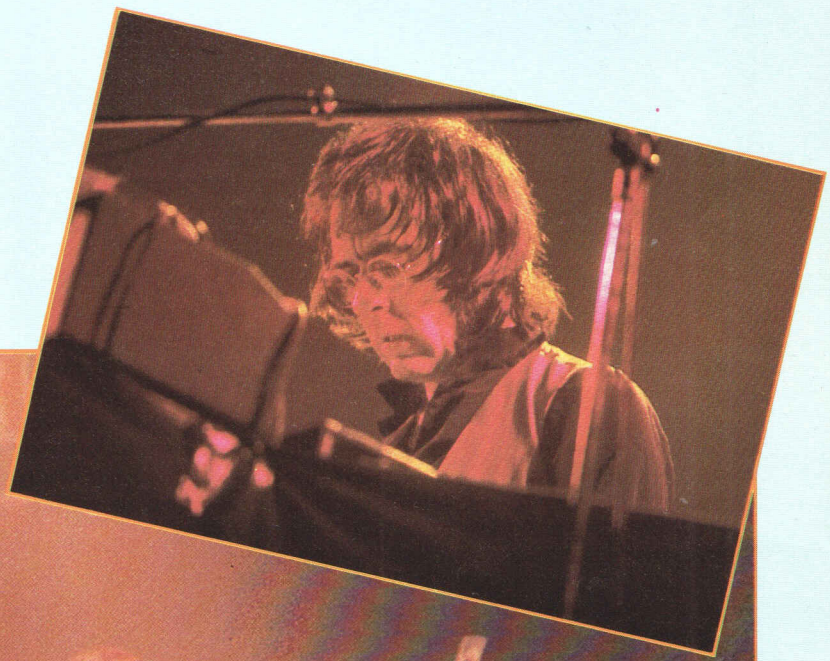
BOB WOFFINDEN

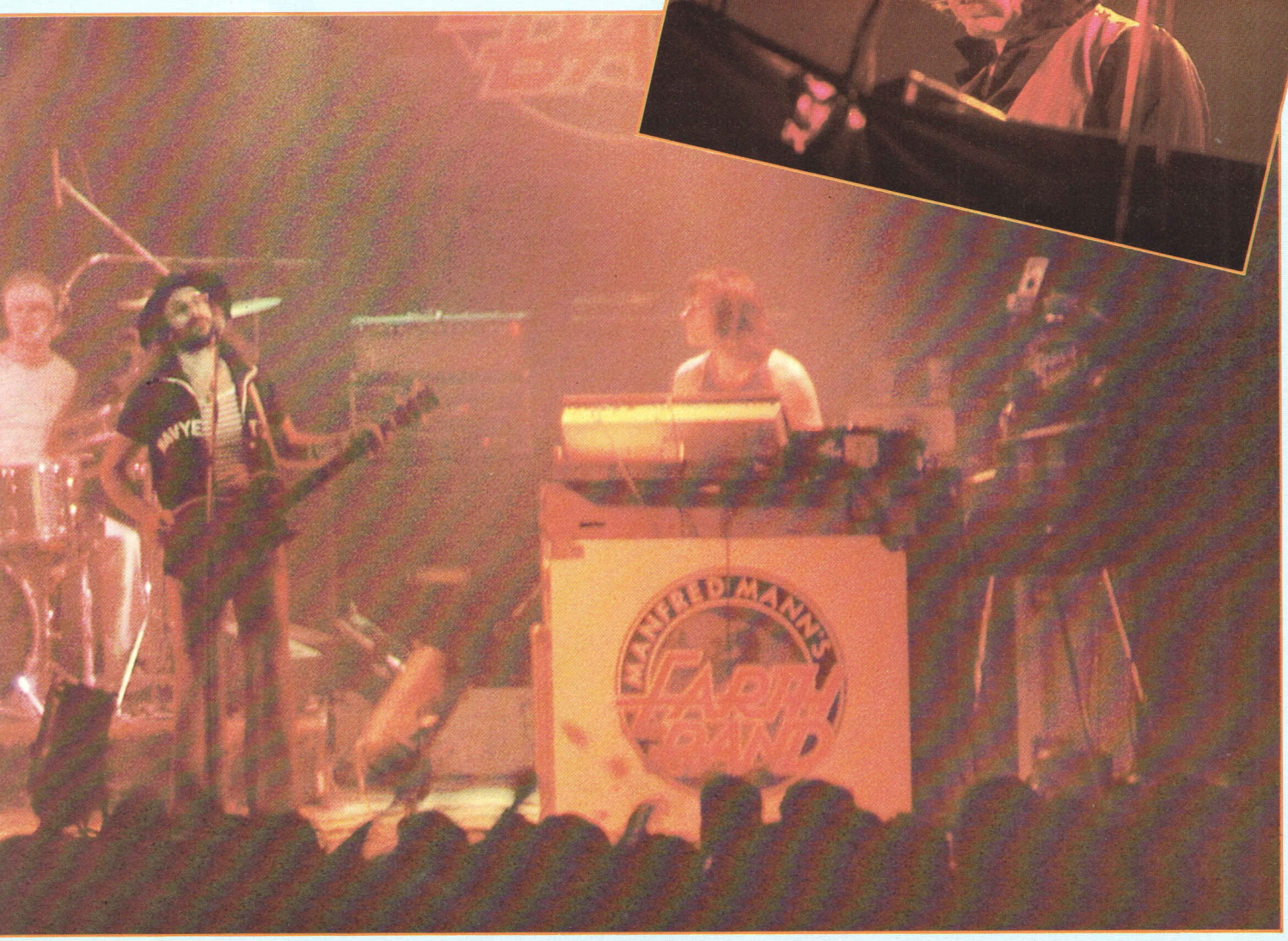
MANFRED MANN
Discography

Singles
Why Should We Not/Brother Jack (HMV POP 1189, 1963); Cock-A-Hoop/Now You're Needing Me (HMV POP 1225, 1963); 5-4-3-2-1/Without You (HMV POP 1252, 1963); Hubble Bubble Toil And Trouble/I'm Your Kingpin (HMV POP 1282, 1964); Do Wah Diddy Diddy/What You Gonna Do (HMV POP 1320, 1964); Sha La La/John Hardy (HMV POP 1346, 1964); Come Tomorrow/What Did I Do Wrong (HMV POP 1381, 1965); Oh No Not My Baby/What Am I Doing Wrong (HMV POP 1413, 1965); If You Gotta Go, Go Now/Stay Around (HMV POP 1466, 1965); Pretty Flamingo/You're Standing By (HMV POP 1523, 1966); Poison Ivy/You Gave Me Somebody To Love (HMV POP 1541, 1966); Just Like A Woman/I Wanna Be Right (Fontana TF730, 1966); Semi-Detached Suburban Mr. James/Morning After The Party (Fontana TF757, 1966); Ha Ha Said The Clown/Feeling So Good (Fontana TF812, 1967); Sweet Pea/One Way (Fontana TF828, 1967); So Long Dad/Funniest Gig (Fontana TF862, 1967); Mighty Quinn/By Request Edwin Garvey (Fontana TF897, 1968); Up The Junction/Sleepy Hollow (Fontana TF908, 1968); My Name Is Jack/There Is A Man (Fontana TF943, 1968); Fox On The Run/Too Many People (Fontana TF985, 1968); Ragamuffin Man/A 'B' Side (Fontana TF1013, 1969).

EPs
Manfred Mann (HMV 7EG8848, 1964); *Grooving* (HMV 7EG8876, 1964); *One In The Middle* (HMV 7EG8908, 1965); *No Living Without Loving* (HMV 7EG8922, 1965); *Machines* (HMV 7EG8942, 1966); *Instrumental Asylum* (HMV 7EG8949, 1966); *As Was* (HMV 7EG8962, 1966); *Instrumental Assassination* (Fontana TE17483, 1966).

Albums (selective)
Five Faces Of Manfred Mann (HMV CLP1731, 1964); *Mann Made* HMV CLP1911, 1965); *Mann Made Hits* (HMV CLP3559, 1966); *As Is* (Fontana TL5377 [mono] STL5377 [stereo], 1966); *Semi-Detached Suburban* (EMI EMTV19, compilation).





Opposite top: The final Manfred Mann line-up. Paul Jones (inset opposite) played on in the Eighties with the Blues Band, and Manfred Mann (right) formed the Earth Band (below).

FLYING HIGH

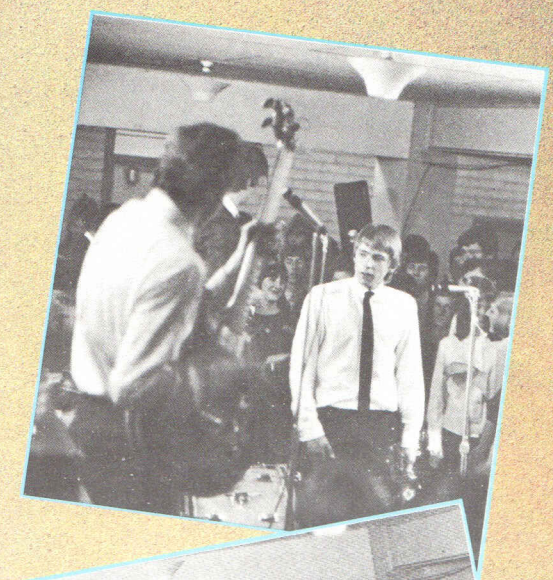
The Yardbirds nurtured three of rock's greatest guitarists

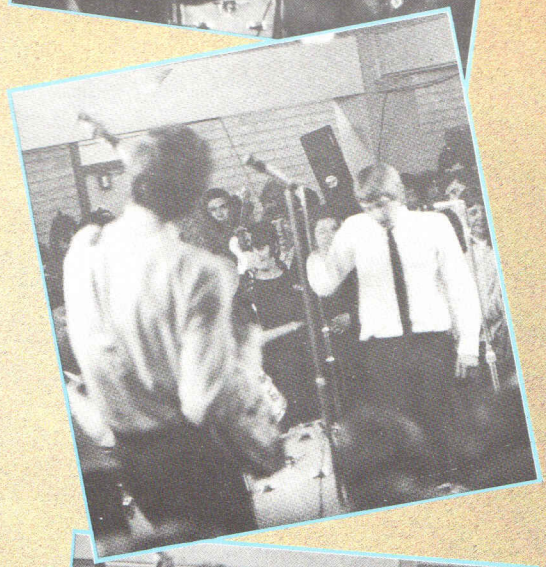
By 1963, RHYTHM AND BLUES in Britain had become much more than a minority taste. New groups were forming, inspired by the sound of Chicago's electric blues and the approach of such early English R&B bands as Blues Incorporated and the Rolling Stones; they drew their repertoires from the work of American blues artists and generally modelled their image on that of the Stones. One of these new groups was formed in London in early 1963 by Keith Relf (born 22 March 1943, harmonica, vocals), Paul Samwell-Smith (8 May 1943, bass guitar), Tony 'Top' Topham (lead guitar) and Chris Dreja (born 11 November 1946, rhythm guitar). Initially the band were named the Metropolis Blues Quartet but following the addition of drummer Jim McCarty (born 25 July 1943) later that year, they became the Yardbirds.

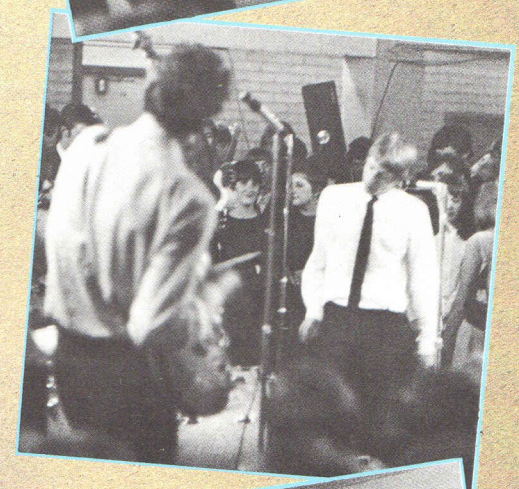
To begin with, the group simply attempted to copy their favourite R&B numbers note for note, but when Topham chose to stay on at art school rather than persevere with music, Relf recruited guitarist Eric Clapton and a distinctive Yardbirds sound began to emerge. Clapton (born 30 March 1945), an avid blues enthusiast since his days at Kingston School of Art, had previously played in R&B bands the Roosters and Casey Jones and the Engineers and had developed an electric guitar style that went much further than his contemporaries who, in the main, were content to recycle Chuck Berry phrases.

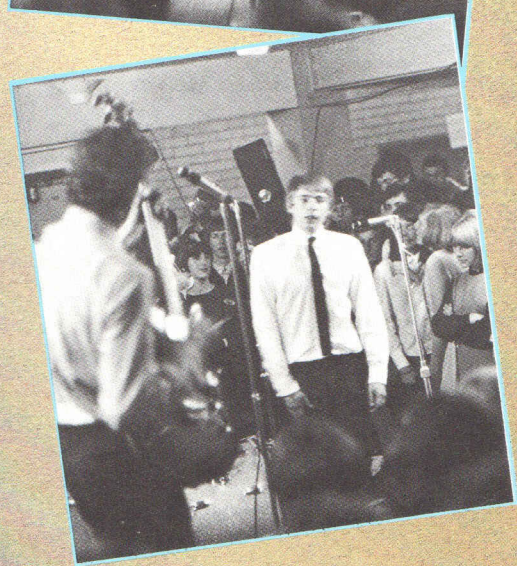
The Yardbirds' powerful rhythm section of Dreja, McCarty and Samwell-Smith was to provide Clapton with ample room for his virtuoso soloing and the group's R&B reinterpretations began to gain originality. By the end of 1963, their reputation was such that they replaced the Rolling Stones as resident band at Richmond's Crawdaddy Club and soon progressed to a regular Friday night spot at the Marquee, where they were billed as 'the most blueswailing Yardbirds'.

Giorgio Gomelsky, who had run the Crawdaddy, was by now the group's man-









ager and in the spring of 1964 he negotiated a recording contract with Columbia. The Yardbirds' first single, a strong version of the Billy Boy Arnold song 'I Wish You Would', was issued in June; the follow-up, 'Good Morning Little Schoolgirl', saw the group into the charts for the first time, reaching Number 44 in November. Their debut album, *Five Live Yardbirds*, recorded live at the Marquee, was released in December. With brash, confident versions of such numbers as Chuck Berry's 'Too Much Monkey Business' and Bo Diddley's 'I'm A Man', it showed the assured grasp the group had on contemporary R&B forms. However, under Gomelsky's direction, the Yardbirds were soon to veer away from rhythm and blues towards more commercial territory, hoping to emulate the success of the Stones.

'For Your Love', a song written by up-and-coming pop composer Graham Gouldman (later to be a member of 10cc), was selected as the group's third single release and, in April 1965, the record reached Number 3 in the UK charts, entering the American Top Ten two months later. Blues purist that he was, Clapton hated the blatant commercialism of 'For Your Love' and contributed little to its recording, the hooks of the song being based instead on harpsichord chords played by Brian Auger. Although Clapton's guitar work was much more evident on 'Got To Hurry', the instrumental B-side, he was shortly to leave the group, disgusted at their new musical direction, and return to strict blues with John Mayall's Bluesbreakers.

Beck in the band

The Yardbirds began the search for a replacement guitarist by approaching session guitarist Jimmy Page. Page was unwilling to give up his lucrative session work by joining a permanent line-up but he suggested an alternative in Jeff Beck, a member of struggling club band the Tridents. He immediately accepted the Yardbirds' offer.

Beck, although (like Clapton) initially influenced by American blues guitarists such as Muddy Waters and Buddy Guy, had evolved a style of playing which was very different to that of his predecessor. Less restrained, and more willing to experiment with different forms, Beck was already exploring the possibilities of feedback; as Relf later recalled, 'Jeff was the guy for developing sounds. You could never get him to tune up; he'd go on stage with his guitar totally out of tune and bend the strings.' And it was this undisciplined yet inventive style that was to shape the Yardbirds' eventual path.

Another Graham Gouldman song, 'Heart Full Of Soul', was released in July 1965 and repeated the success of 'For Your

Far left: The classic Yardbirds line-up of 1965-66; standing, Dreja (left) and Beck; seated, from left, Samwell-Smith, McCarty and Relf. Left: Relf at the Crawdaddy.

Love' by going to Number 2 in Britain and Number 9 in the States. On the song, Beck integrated perfectly into the sound of the group – now confirmed as something far removed from rhythm and blues – with his sustained guitar notes underlining the hooks of the number. 'Evil Hearted You', released in October, was the third and last Gouldman A-side and simply reworked the formula of 'Heart Full Of Soul' but its coupling, Samwell-Smith and McCarty's 'Still I'm Sad', pointed to a new progression within the group, with its haunting and atmospheric vocal performance based on a Gregorian chant.

The progressive route was followed in March 1966 by the strident and assured 'Shapes Of Things', written by Relf, Samwell-Smith and McCarty. With Beck's adventurous and abrasive guitar solo, the release anticipated the psychedelic boom by some months. 'We were all on the threshold of this new thing,' Beck was to recall later. 'The Yardbirds were the very first psychedelic group really.' In June, 'Over Under Sideways Down', with its sitar-like guitar patterns and its infectious calls and shouts, became the Yardbirds' fifth UK Top Ten single in a row.

Anarchy in Oxford

Personal difficulties were appearing within the group, however, behind the creative imagination and musical confidence displayed on record. The heavy touring schedule was taking its toll and Paul Samwell-Smith in particular was disenchanted with the pop star role and unhappy with the lack of serious appreciation of the group's efforts. He was also a great believer in musical precision and adherence to strictly-rehearsed neatness, in contrast to Relf and Beck for whom such disciplines were anathema. After a particularly anarchic group performance in Oxford in July, during which Relf (according to Jimmy Page, who was in the audience) 'got totally drunk and was rolling round the stage, grappling with the mike, blowing his harmonica in all the wrong places and just singing nonsense words', Samwell-Smith stormed out. (He went on to become a producer, working with Cat Stevens among others.)

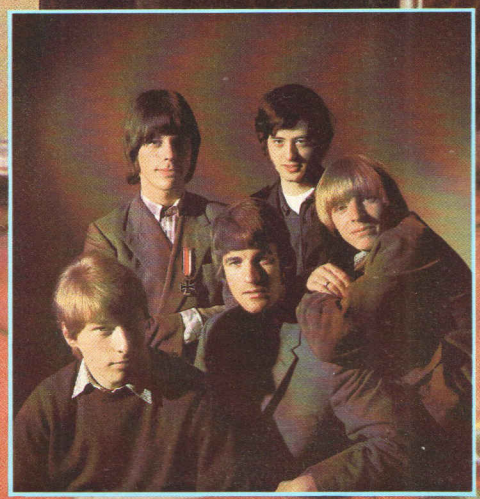
Jimmy Page was again approached and invited to join the group as bass player; this time he accepted the offer. With this new line-up, the group proceeded to record 'Happenings Ten Years Time Ago', their most experimental single yet. With Beck's controlled feedback imitating a police siren and a complex battery of studio ideas, the number belied the fact that little time had been devoted to its recording. For the Yardbirds never spent long in the studio; their first studio album, *Yardbirds,* was made in five days on a four-track machine and, according to Relf, most singles were completed in one take: 'Most of the tracks were done on the spot – while the guys were putting down the backing track, I was writing the lyrics in the vocal booth.'

'Happenings Ten Years Time Ago' was just too radical to be commercial and it reached only Number 43 in the UK charts, although in America it fared somewhat better by reaching Number 30. The B-side of the record, 'Psycho Daisies', featured Page playing lead guitar alongside Beck with Dreja on bass. Page had switched to guitar in September 1966 when Beck fell ill for a brief period and on the latter's recovery the two of them began to explore the possibilities of twin lead playing. It was this alternative Yardbirds line-up that appeared in Michelangelo Antonioni's film *Blow Up.*

Smashing and strolling

Blow Up, a perverse mystery movie starring David Hemmings and Vanessa Redgrave, was filled with images of Carnaby Street fashion and Swinging London decadence. Although Antonioni's original choice of group, the Who, seemed more in keeping with the pop-star image required, Jeff Beck managed a competent guitar-smashing routine while his fellow Yardbirds played 'Stroll On', a thinly disguised version of Tiny Bradshaw's 'The Train Kept A-Rollin'. 'Stroll On' appeared on the *Blow Up* soundtrack album in April 1967 and was to be the last recorded evidence of Beck and Page's lead collaboration. Two dates into a four-week Dick Clark Caravan of Stars tour in October 1966, Beck withdrew, claiming tonsillitis, and was subsequently fired.

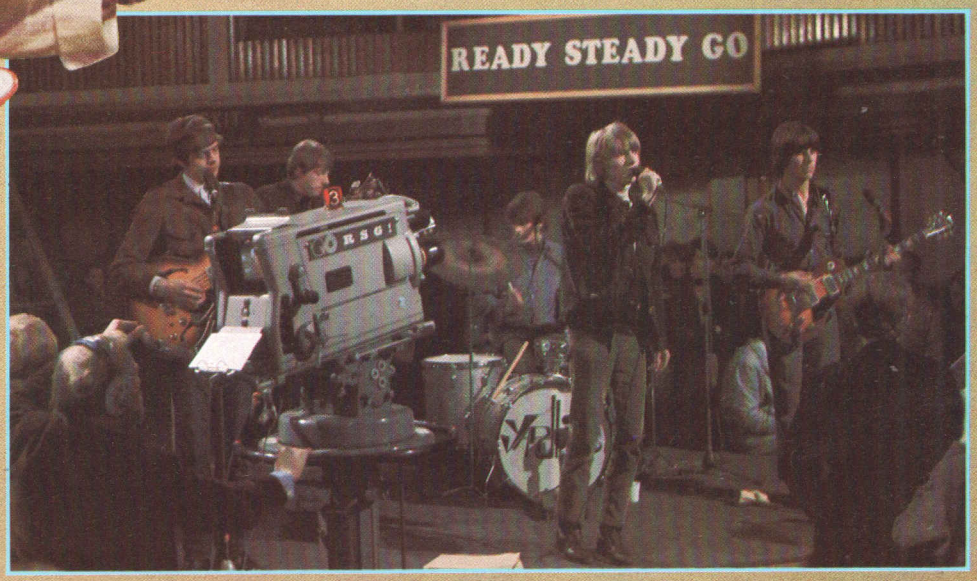
Beck's behaviour had become increasingly erratic over recent months and relations with his fellow members had become strained, as Jimmy Page recalled: 'One time in the dressing room I walked in and Beck had his guitar up over his head about to bring it down on Keith Relf's head but instead smashed it on the floor. Relf looked at him with total astonishment and Beck said "Why did you make



One band, three guitar kings. Right: Eric Clapton with Telecaster and Relf. Far right: Jeff Beck on 'RSG' with his Les Paul. Below: Three stages of evolution. Early days with Eric (below); the brief Beck-Page link-up (centre); and nearing the end as a quartet (right).

me do that?" Everyone said "Goodness gracious, what a funny chap".'

Following Beck's departure, the Yardbirds continued as a quartet and, feeling the need for another hit single, they switched producers from Simon Napier-Bell (who had taken over from Gomelsky before 'Over Under Sideways Down') to Mickie Most. The association proved to be fruitless, however; the band were struggling to find a new direction and the material recorded at Most's suggestion – including cover versions of Nilsson's 'Ten Little Indians' and Manfred Mann's 'Ha Ha Said The Clown' – seemed particularly unsuited to their style.



Separate ways

Disillusionment was setting in within the group, and although they were still immensely popular in America, at home their existence was by now scarcely acknowledged. In January 1968 they released their final single, 'Goodnight Sweet Josephine', but were so dissatisfied that they insisted that Columbia withdraw it. Following a date at Luton College of Technology, the Yardbirds ground to a halt in July 1968.

Following the split, Keith Relf and Jim McCarty formed a folk duo named Together. Relf had long been interested in pursuing a gentler type of music, as shown by two solo singles he had recorded in 1966, 'Mr Zero' written by Bob Lind, and his own 'Shapes In My Mind'. Together released one single, 'Henry's Coming Home', before expanding into Renaissance. After an album on Island, the group broke up; McCarty formed Shoot while Relf joined Medicine Head and then formed Armageddon. In 1976 they teamed up again to form Illusion but in May of that year, before the new group could perform, Relf electrocuted himself while practising guitar.

Page and Dreja, meanwhile, had remained together to form the New Yardbirds but Dreja left almost immediately to pursue a career in photography. Page recruited Robert Plant (vocals) John Paul Jones (bass) and John Bonham (drums) to the group and they became Led Zeppelin. Jeff Beck had already furthered his reputation with his hard rock outfit the Jeff Beck Group, featuring Rod Stewart on vocals.

The influence that the Yardbirds wielded during their most influential period is almost incalculable. Their innovative sounds helped to forge the link between the R&B of the Sixties and the progressive rock of the Seventies. And with their emphasis on guitar experimentation they became the prototype of the many guitar-dominated groups that followed.

BRIAN HOGG

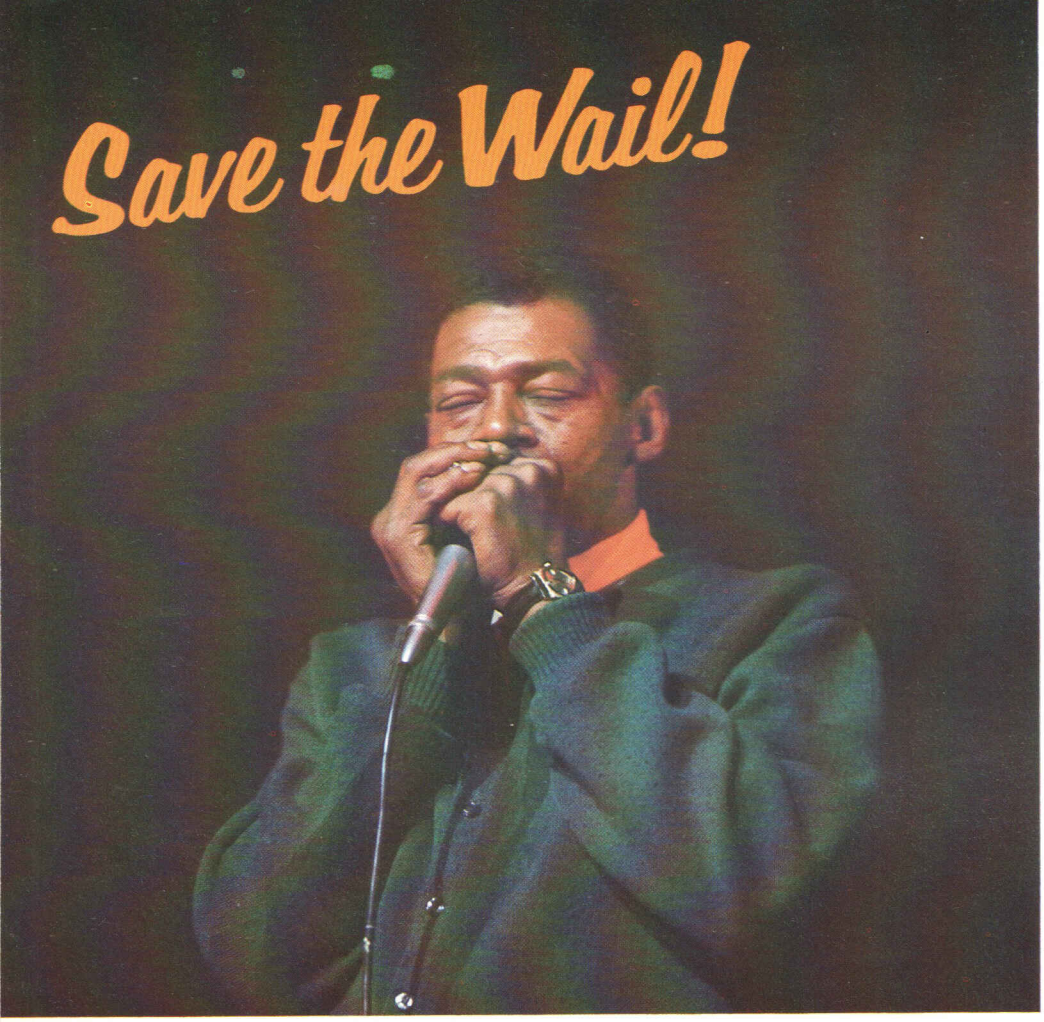
THE YARDBIRDS
Discography

Singles
A Certain Girl/I Wish You Would (Columbia DB7283, 1964); Good Morning Little Schoolgirl/I Ain't Got You (Columbia DB7391, 1964); For Your Love/Got To Hurry (Columbia DB7499, 1965); Heartful Of Soul/Steeled Blues (Columbia DB7594, 1965); Evil Hearted You/Still I'm Sad (Columbia DB7706, 1965); Shapes Of Things/You're A Better Man Than I (Columbia DB7848, 1966); Over Under Sideways Down/Jeff's Boogie (Columbia DB7928, 1966); Happenings Ten Years Time Ago/Psycho Daisies (Columbia DB8024, 1966); Little Games/Puzzles (Columbia DB8165, 1967); Goodnight Sweet Josephine/Think About It (Columbia DB8368, 1968).

EPs
On The Scene (Columbia SEG8413, 1965); *Five Yardbirds* (Columbia SEG8421, 1965); *Yardbirds* (Columbia, SEG8521, 1967).

Albums (selective)
On The Scene (Columbia 33SX1662, 1964, compilation); *Five Live Yardbirds* (Columbia 33XS1677, 1964); *Sonny Boy Williamson And The Yardbirds* (Fontana TL5277, 1965); *Yardbirds* (Columbia SX6063 [mono] SCX6063 [stereo], 1966); *Blow Up: Soundtrack* (MGM C8039 [mono] CS8039 [stereo], 1967); *The Yardbirds Single Hits* (Charly CFM102, compilation).

Save the Wail!



Left: Little Walter, the first harmonica player to use a microphone, influenced a generation of young R&B harpists.

The rise and fall of rock harmonica

LIKE MUCH of the music of the early Sixties, there was nothing intrinsically new about the harmonica; indeed its earliest ancestor, the Chinese Sheng of 3000 BC, would have been more suited to the British Museum than the Marquee Club, so strange was its appearance. This mutation of funeral urn and pipe organ eventually made its way to Europe, probably through one of Japan's first attempts at musical instrument copying, but it was not until a German clock-maker named Ludwig Buschmann patented his collection of 15 pitch-pipes as the 'Mund Aeoline' around 1821 that the harmonica achieved recognisable form.

The principle of the harmonica is relatively simple; the instrument contains a number of chambers, each containing two thin metal reeds anchored at one end. It is the reeds that give the harmonica its biting tone, and distinguish it from the varieties of Pan pipes (which are played in a similar fashion) found all over the world. When the player blows, the reed attached nearest the chamber opening will vibrate, and when he draws back (sucks), the other reed vibrates in a flow of air from the opposite direction. The player covers with his tongue the chambers he does not wish to play (although he can, of course, play more than one note at one time). Diatonic or 'vamper' instruments give an octave range in a specified key, which the player obtains by alternate blowing and drawing.

The more complicated chromatic harmonica offers up to a four-octave range by 'doubling up'; extra reeds can be brought into play by a finger operated slide which silences the first pair of reeds, diverting the airflow to those giving the extra (chromatic) notes. This instrument is far less widely used in rock and blues playing, although it has proved very effective in the hands of virtuosi like Larry Adler.

The characteristic note-bending of blues harmonica players is achieved more easily by *drawing* on the note; thus and perhaps confusingly, vamper harps have two keys — the octave when blown (say C to C) and the octave when drawn (G to G). The latter will be all-important when deciding which harmonica to use on a song in a particular key.

British R&B musicians of the Sixties drew inspiration from such masters of the blues harp as Little Walter, Jimmy Reed or Sonny Boy Williamson. Although the original country blues in which the instrument had grown up employed purely acoustic sounds, the harmonica was far from overshadowed in the company of electric instruments.

Muddy Waters' sideman Little Walter was the first to adopt amplification to boost volume and projection when his employer switched to the electric guitar. Born Marion Walter Jacobs on 1 May 1930 in Louisiana, he brought a jazz influence to the blues harmonica which, although more difficult to master than the simpler style of Jimmy Reed, was ultimately the more influential. Little Walter featured on many of Waters' outstanding tracks, like 'I'm Ready' and 'Mannish Boy'. His powerful sound also brought him a run of solo R&B hits in the mid Fifties which became required listening for all who claimed any more than a passing interest in the instrument.

Although Walter had early success by amplifying the harmonica, the procedure was to cause continued problems to later generations. While the piercing sound had the ability to cut through primitive PA systems, the harpists's classic stance – cupping the hand round both instrument and microphone – was the perfect recipe for feedback. Difficulties at the mixing desk when bursts of harmonica and vocals alternated in call-and-response fashion could, it was discovered, be lessened by the employment of two mikes with different characteristics.

Harps in the charts

The harmonica provides a constant reference point through all the classic R&B hits of the early Sixties. *Five Live Yardbirds*, perhaps the definitive document of sweaty, live British blues, is punctuated by the incessant, impatient blowing of Keith Relf, source of the 'blueswailing' element so beloved by music critics of the period. Manfred Mann found success when their third single, '5-4-3-2-1', was written to feature the harp interjections of their vocalist Paul Jones. Mick Jagger, of the fast-rising Rolling Stones, bore witness to another great attribute of the harmonica; unlike a guitar, it imposed no restrictions on on-stage movement.

The mid-Sixties folk-rock explosion provided a gentler setting for the harmonica, and the Lovin' Spoonful's John Sebastian was one of the first thus to exploit the instrument. The son of a classical harmonica player, Sebastian had already played harp on various sessions before his own group took off. Bob Dylan had, of course, been ploughing an avowedly less commercial furrow for some years previously, with his harmonica suspended in front of his face on a metal frame as he played acoustic guitar. Unlike Sebastian, however, his roots were more in country blues than jugband folk, as his first album, *Bob Dylan*, confirms.

The producer of this debut album was John Hammond, whose organisation of the 'From Spirituals To Swing' concerts at New York's Carnegie Hall back in 1939 had offered a chance for Sonny Terry to confirm his position as one of the greatest country blues harmonica players. Although his original guitarist partner, Blind Boy Fuller, died in 1940, Terry teamed with Brownie McGhee to form a partnership which was to exert a considerable influence on the British blues

through disciples Alexis Korner and Cyril Davies in the mid Fifties. Terry played on into the Eighties with McGhee and must be acknowledged as the grand old man of the blues harmonica.

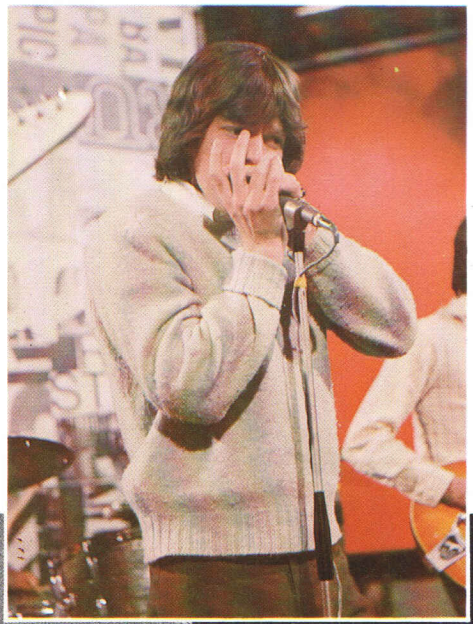
The crossover between rhythm and blues through mod into the West Indian ska and bluebeat styles was not without significance for the harmonica. Millie's 1964 hit 'My Boy Lollipop' employed the talents of one Rod Stewart, in one of his earliest disc excursions, to provide the memorable harp break. Stevie Wonder had appeared on the scene in the previous year with his 'Fingertips', a harmonica-based novelty number. Yet despite the subsequent refinement of his technique to produce a delicate and expressive facet of later Wonder recordings, the instrument was not widely used in soul as the music progressed even further from its blues roots of yesteryear.

The era of progressive rock in the early Seventies had little room for the harmonica. The increasing use of keyboards, synthesisers and studio effects rendered it somewhat old fashioned, with only a few diehard virtuosi such as the J. Geils Band's Magic Dick and War's Lee Oskar keeping faith with the instrument. Similarly, but somewhat more surprisingly, the harmonica did not find acceptance in the New Wave of the late Seventies, with XTC's irreverent cover of 'All Along The Watchtower' an honourable exception. Country music, however, had its share of accomplished players through the Sixties and Seventies, with Charlie McCoy – ex-Area Code 615 and of 'Stone Fox Chase' (the 'Old Grey Whistle Test' theme) fame – still the master. And Neil Young deserves mention in the country-rock field.

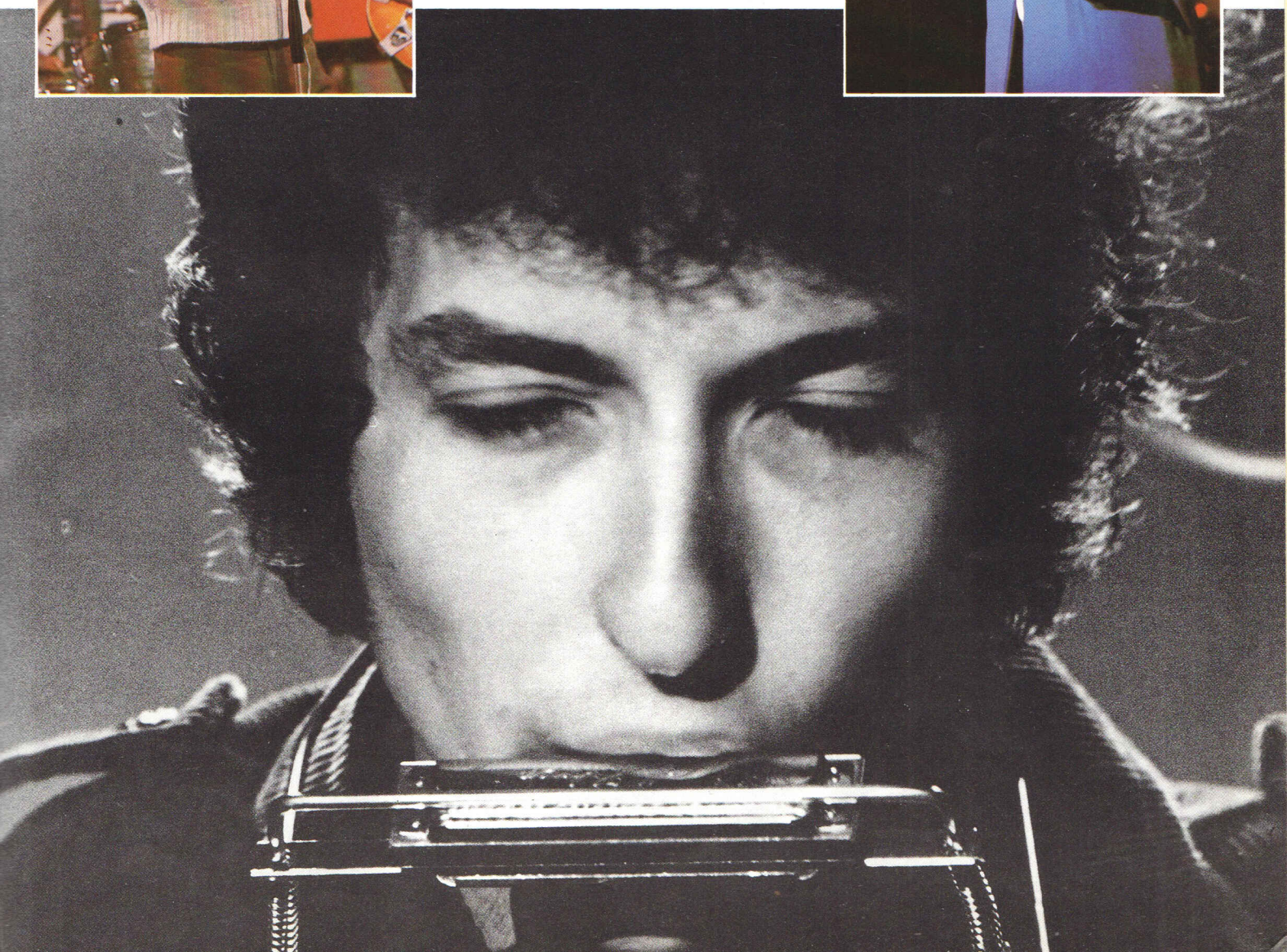
Nor did the blues harp die. Although the heady nights of 1963 at the Crawdaddy may now be a distant memory, revivalists such as Paul Jones (Blues Band, ex-Manfred Mann), Lee Brilleaux (Dr. Feelgood), Mark Feltham (ex-Nine Below Zero) and Lew Lewis still kept wailing into the Eighties. Lewis, whose stage somersaults, scorching solos and Little Walter covers have, sadly, been largely ignored by the record-buying public, put his fellow musicians' collective plea quite neatly in the title of his 1979 album: *Save The Wail!*

MICHAEL HEATLEY

Below: A youthful Mick Jagger wails with the Stones. Bottom: Bob Dylan rests on a handy harp-holder.

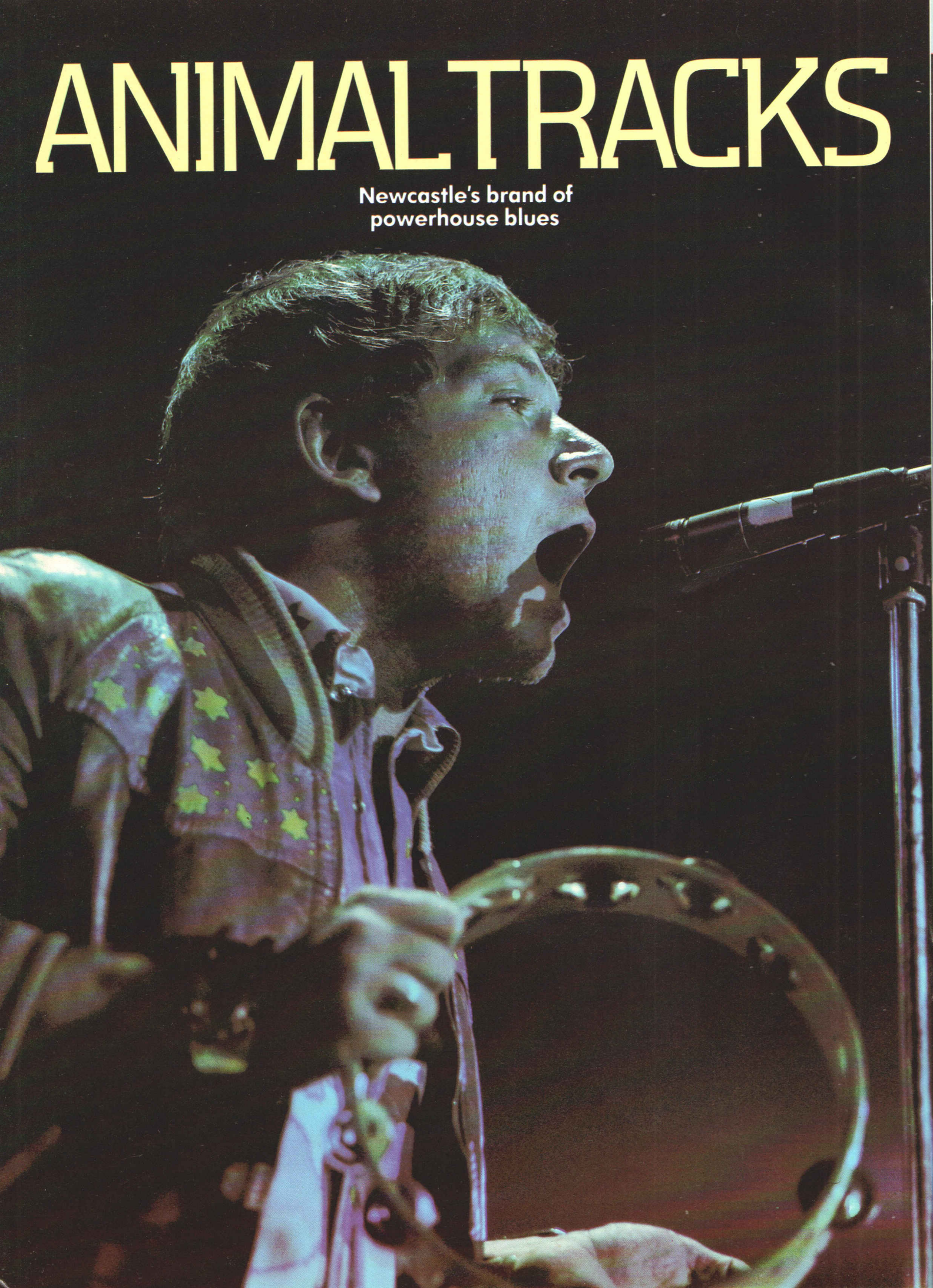


Below: Stevie Wonder, whose distinctive harmonica sound became an essential part of many later recordings.



ANIMAL TRACKS

Newcastle's brand of powerhouse blues



Eric Burdon (opposite and above): a wild and frenzied performer with a rough and ready voice. Left: The original Animals show off their button-down collars; from left, Hilton Valentine, Alan Price, Eric Burdon, Chas Chandler and John Steel.

In 1963, THE NORTHERN BEAT boom was being answered further south by a trend, centred on London, towards a more aggressive R&B: the sort of music purveyed by the Rolling Stones, the Kinks and the Pretty Things. At the same time, groups such as Them in Belfast and John Mayall's Blues Syndicate in Manchester were developing individual R&B and blues-influenced styles independently of the capital's flourishing scene. Of these provincial R&B groups, the most distinctive, and ultimately the most succesful, were Newcastle's Animals.

Like other R&B bands of the time, the Animals' music was, initially, inspired by black American artists such as Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley and John Lee Hooker. But whereas the majority of their rivals relied heavily on a driving rhythm guitar, the Animals deviated from the orthodox line-up: instead of a second guitarist they featured a keyboard player, Alan Price. Furthermore, in Eric Burdon the Animals possessed the most raucous and blackest-sounding vocalist of all.

The Animals started life in 1960 as the Alan Price Combo, a quartet made up of Price (born 19 April 1942), bassist Bryan 'Chas' Chandler (born 18 December 1938), guitarist Hilton Valentine (born 2 May 1943) and drummer John Steel (born 4 February 1941). With their well-attended Saturday night performances at Newcastle's Downbeat Club – a damp room above a warehouse that shook each time a train passed by on the nearby tracks – the Combo built up a sizeable following. In 1962, Eric Burdon (born 19 May 1941) was asked to join and take over from Alan Price as lead singer. With the inclusion of Burdon as frontman, the band's stage act became more frenzied and energetic and this led fans to refer to them not as the Alan Price Combo but as 'the Animals' – a name the group soon adopted.

'The name was probably an association with the kind of music we play – earthy and gutty,' said Burdon in 1965. 'It's a sort of animal sound. On stage we can be pretty wild. No routines – just moments of uninhibited inspiration when we go slightly potty.' However, when the group had first appeared on 'Ready Steady Go' in 1964, performing their debut hit 'Baby Let Me Take You Home', Burdon had told the programme's presenter Keith Fordyce that they called themselves the Animals 'because we all look like animals'. Chas Chandler on the other hand, later claimed that Graham Bond, the R&B organist, had given the band their name after witnessing one of their less restrained performances.

Demo A-Go-Go

By 1963, the Animals had established themselves as the north-east's top R&B beat attraction and they had graduated from the seedy interiors of the Downbeat Club to a residency at the plusher, more prestigious Club A-Go-Go (to which they later paid tribute on 'Club A-Go-Go', the B-side of their 1965 hit 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood').

This growing popularity prompted them to record a demo in mid 1963 which they hoped might impress promoters and A&R men in the capital. Four numbers were chosen from their live set – John Lee Hooker's 'Boom Boom,' Bo Diddley's 'Pretty Thing', and Willie Dixon's 'I Just Wanna Make Love To You' and 'Big Boss Man'. Five hundred copies were pressed in EP form, some to be sold to fans and others for dispatch to London (This demo EP was reissued by Decca three years later under the title, *In The Beginning There Was – Early Animals.)*

Meanwhile, the group's increasing stature was leading to further work backing visiting American blues singers, and on 30 December 1963 they appeared at the Club A-Go-Go with the extravagantly-behaved Sonny Boy Williamson (Rice Miller). The evening's activities were recorded for posterity and emerged much later on two albums, *In The Beginning* (which appeared on the American Wand label in 1973) and *Sonny Boy Williamson And The Animals,* released in 1977 on the UK Charly label.

The first of these, in particular, bears witness to the Animals' early brash and energetic R&B leanings, renditions of standards such as Chuck Berry's 'I'm Almost Grown' and John Lee Hooker's 'Dimples' being peppered with Eric Burdon's penchant for ad-lib lyrics and sarcastic references to the Rolling Stones, the group's more celebrated rivals. Burdon's wild vocal performance reached a peak on the album's closing track, 'C Jam Blues', on which Williamson replaced John Steel on drums and pounded away in most unorthodox fashion, prompting the singer to shriek 'You play the drums so crazy, you might have bust my ear!'

The demo EP sent down to London was greeted with enthusiasm by promoters and offers of work in the clubs of the capital began to come in with increasing

regularity. By the end of 1963, the Animals were appearing in London so frequently that they decided to move there. They had chosen the ideal time. Since the Rolling Stones had hit the charts in July with 'Come On' and again in November with 'I Wanna Be Your Man', many record companies had become diverted from Merseybeat and were anxious, instead, to sign R&B groups.

The image had to be right, of course; whereas the Liverpool bands tended to follow the Beatles in donning uniforms and appearing relatively well groomed, clean and wholesome, the R&B contingent had to copy the Rolling Stones and go for an unkempt and unsavoury look. The Animals were fine on this score, as Alan Price recalled: 'We looked the part in those days. We couldn't afford smart mohair suits and so we dressed in denim jerkins and trousers. Pretty shabby they were – people must have thought we were labourers.'

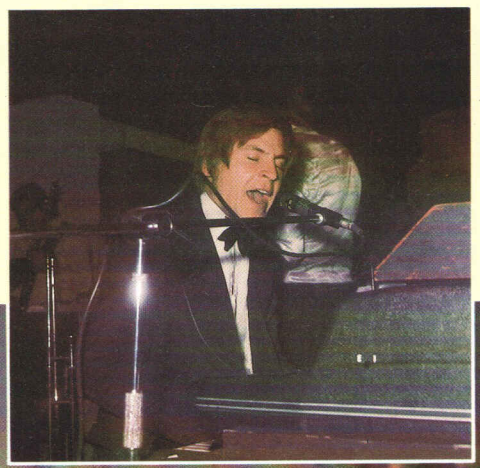
They fitted the musical bill as well and so, while the Pretty Things were snapped up by Fontana, the Kinks by Pye and a host of lesser R&B talents by other labels, the Animals signed to Columbia in early 1964, to be produced by Mickie Most.

Rising in the charts

Most had been an exceedingly successful pop singer in South Africa but in 1962 he returned to England to try his luck in his home country. His attempts to establish himself as a vocalist in the UK proved abortive, however, so he decided to turn his hand to record production work. And he was to prove himself to be acutely aware of commercial tastes at his very first attempt, with the Animals.

Deciding that the group should move away from the raw R&B sound which dominated their live act, Most selected for their debut release a little-known blues song, 'Baby Let Me Follow You Down', which had appeared on Bob Dylan's first album. The lyrics were altered and the title was changed to 'Baby Let Me Take You Home' and, with a neat arrangement by Alan Price and a strong, confident production job from Most, the record went to Number 21 in the UK charts after its release in March 1964.

With this first-time success under their



Alan Price left the Animals in 1965 and adopted the role of popular entertainer (left). His place in the group was taken by Dave Rowberry, at the piano below.

belts, the group chose to follow-up with a traditional blues song still less in keeping with their driving R&B inclinations. 'House Of The Rising Sun', recorded by Josh White in the Forties and resurrected on Dylan's first album, seemed a decidedly odd choice for a single, telling a tale of ruin through prostitution. (The lyrics of the Animals' release were somewhat cleaned-up for public consumption.) Furthermore, the seemingly non-commercial aspects of the number were compounded by the fact that the group's recorded re-working clocked in at four-and-a-half minutes – far longer than the two-and-a-half to three-minute norm.

The executives at Columbia fought against the number's release. They thought that 'House Of The Rising Sun' was not only overlong but also extremely boring – but Mickie Most considered that it stood more than an even chance of chart success and, in the end, his argument won the day. Alan Price had given the song a dramatic, compelling arrangement, Burdon's vocal delivery was fiercely emotive and these elements combined to break the three-minute barrier.

Transatlantic success

'House Of The Rising Sun' went to Number 1 on both sides of the Atlantic in the summer of 1964 (and eventually achieved worldwide sales in excess of eight million). It soon established itself as a contemporary classic to be included in the repertoire of amateur bands the world over.

Ironically, because the song owed much to forms of American folk music (a fact that could not be disguised by Alan Price's R&B-tinged organ playing or Eric Burdon's gruff, urban blues-styled vocal performance) the Animals now came to be thought of as a folk-rock group by American audiences who were unaware of the group's basic R&B approach. However, amends were made by the third single, 'I'm Crying', which was released in September. Written by Price and Burdon, 'I'm Crying' captured all the essential elements of the Animals' live act – the confident drive of Price's organ work, Burdon's brash, raw voice (which cracked as he strained for the upper octave) and the aggressive fills of Hilton Valentine, a much-underrated guitarist.

In the light of the massive success of 'House Of The Rising Sun', 'I'm Crying' seemed a comparative failure despite reaching Number 8 in Britain and Number 19 in the United States. It hardened Mickie Most's conviction that the group's own compositions should be used only for B-sides and album tracks, though anyway Price and Burdon were a less than prolific songwriting team.

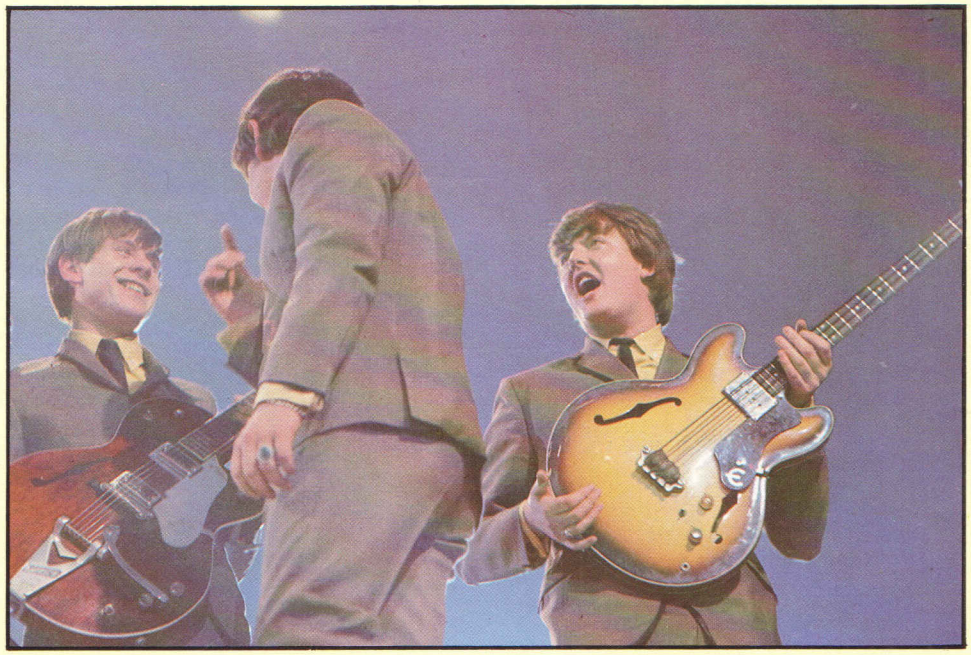
The group's first album, *The Animals,* was released in October 1964, and proved to be something of a disappointment despite Most granting them ample room to indulge their R&B passions. It contained uncharacteristically tame covers of Little Richard's 'The Girl Can't Help It' and Chuck Berry's 'Around and Around', and versions of 'Boom Boom' and 'Dimples' that had none of the power of their live treatments on the Club A-Go-Go tapes.

A second album, *Animal Tracks,* issued the following May, was similarly patchy. Again, it was made up largely of stage favourites such as 'Let The Good Times Roll' and 'Roadrunner', but none – with the honourable exception of Ray Charles' 'I Believe To My Soul', which featured Eric Burdon at his most soulful – hinted at the excitement of live performance. It seemed that Mickie Most saw pop production wholly in terms of singles and viewed long players as something of a chore. (This theory is supported by the fact that during the years from 1967 to 1977, Most produced 63 UK Top Thirty hits – far more than any other producer – but only one Top Ten album, which was a 'greatest hits' compilation.)

On the singles front, however, Most could not be faulted. In February 1965, the Animals' cover of 'Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood', first recorded by Nina Simone the previous year, went to Number 3 in the UK. Most's astute ear for commercial appeal maintained the group's chart record throughout the year. Sam Cooke's 'Bring It On Home To Me', 'We've Gotta Get Out Of This Place' and 'It's My Life' all succeeded on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Animals were by now a well-established commercial force, exceeded in popularity only by the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Appearances in such pop films as *Get Yourself A College Girl* (alongside the Dave Clark Five, the Standells and Mary Ann Mobley – Miss America, 1959) and *Pop Gear* (re-titled *Go Go*

Below: Eric Burdon gives Hilton Valentine some friendly advice while Chas Chandler looks on. Bottom: Burdon polices his new Animals line-up in 1967.



Mania for US audiences), a non-stop performance spectacular featuring, among many other acts, Billy J. Kramer, Billie Davis and newsreel footage of the Beatles, exposed the group to an even wider audience.

Shortly after the recording of 'Bring It On Home To Me', Alan Price left the group (citing fear of flying as the cause) and his place was taken by Dave Rowberry, previously with the Mike Cotton Sound. Following Price's departure, differences between the band and their producer began to mount; while Price, the musical arranger, had been reasonably content to follow Most's direction, Valentine and Burdon felt less comfortable with the commercial pop route. Now that Price was gone, they began to make their objections more strongly felt. Eric Burdon expressed his discomfiture in television appearances by mis-miming to and sneering through 'We've Gotta Get Out Of This Place' and 'It's My Life'. At the beginning of 1966, the Animals' contract expired and, rather than remain in the clutches of Mickie Most, they left Columbia and signed with the Decca label.

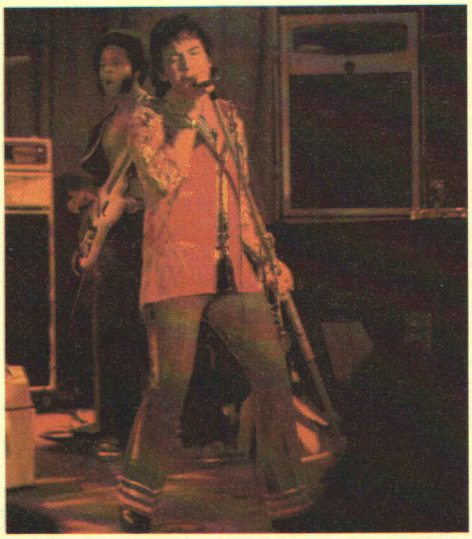
Tom Wilson, their new producer, granted the group a greater degree of artistic control and this they used wisely. Both singles for the new label, 'Inside Looking Out'(1966), a savage, passionate song of imprisonment, and 'Don't Bring Me Down'(1966), an intelligent reading of a Goffin-King number, became hits and their album *Animalisms* displayed a much greater degree of care and effort than previous attempts. However, discontent within the group still lingered. John Steel had quit after 'Inside Looking Out' to be replaced by the Nashville Teens' drummer, Barry Jenkins, and Eric Burdon was becoming even more drawn away from R&B roots towards new psychedelic trends. Shortly after the release of 'Don't Bring Me Down', the Animals announced that they had disbanded.

Sandoz and Simon Smith

After the split, Burdon retained the group name (and the services of Barry Jenkins) and, following a brief attempt to launch a new line-up in Britain, moved to California to embrace the prevailing hippie drug culture. He took with him guitarists Vic Briggs (formerly with Steampacket) and Danny McCulloch, bassist John Weider and Jenkins. Billed as Eric Burdon and the Animals, they secured a deal with MGM who handled all previous American releases of the original group.

The new group produced four excellent hippie-oriented singles – 'When I Was Young' (the B-side of which, 'A Girl Named Sandoz', was a blatant tribute to LSD, Sandoz being the name of the laboratories in which the drug had been developed), 'Good Times', 'San Franciscan Nights' (a Top Ten hit on both sides of the Atlantic in 1967) and 'Sky Pilot'.

Eric Burdon continued to pursue his hippie obsessions with increasing enthu-



Burdon in the Seventies, singing with funk band War.

siasm, issuing baffling statements such as 'My whole group is basically hung up on a sort of religion which has sort of evolved' and 'The drug experience has taught us that to be deranged is not necessarily to be useless'.

Burdon disbanded the group in 1969 and his career since, which included a stint fronting the black American funk band War, has become increasingly erratic. His former Animal allies, Alan Price and Chas Chandler, meanwhile, had been pursuing more orthodox and successful routes.

In 1966, Chandler had gone into management and production work as the man behind the Jimi Hendrix Experience. He later signed Slade, for whom he produced no less than 13 UK Top Ten singles (including six Number 1 hits) in less than four years (1971-75). Alan Price, on the other hand, continued to play and perform. After leaving the Animals, he had

Eric broadcasts an eccentric message for his hippie friends.

formed the Alan Price Set and soon established himself as a popular, somewhat middle-of-the-road artist. His solo hits included Randy Newman's 'Simon Smith And His Amazing Dancing Bear', 'The House That Jack Built' (his own composition, both in 1967) and 'Don't Stop The Carnival', a Sonny Rollins number, in 1968. The Set broke up in 1968 and apart from a hit with 'Rosetta' (on which he teamed up with fellow keyboard player Georgie Fame as Fame and Price Together) in 1971, he was absent from the charts for some years. Nevertheless, Price consolidated his position as a popular entertainer through regular television appearances and solo album work. Price recorded 10 albums between 1966 and 1978, including the film soundtrack *O Lucky Man!* and *Between Yesterday And Today*, a brave attempt to explore his northern, working-class roots in song, and a single lifted from the album, 'Jarrow Song', put him back in the UK Top Ten.

In 1968, the original members of the Animals had got back together for a Christmas concert at Newcastle's City Hall and in 1976 they re-united to record an album, *Before We Were So Rudely Interrupted,* at Chandler's home studio. Sadly, although Burdon's voice retained the throaty attack of old, the performances of the remaining musicians proved to be workmanlike at best. The album was even more lifeless than the group's first two Columbia efforts, barely hinting at the power of their achievements on single with Mickie Most or those moments of raw R&B magic captured in a dank Newcastle club more than a decade before.

TOM HIBBERT

THE ANIMALS
Discography (to 1968)

Singles
Baby Let Me Take You Home/Gonna Send You Back To Walker (Columbia DB7247, 1964); House Of The Rising Sun/Talking About You (Columbia DB7301, 1964); I'm Crying/Take It Easy (Columbia DB7354, 1964); Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood/Club A-Go-Go (Columbia DB7445, 1965); Bring It On Home To Me/For Miss Caulker (Columbia DB7539, 1965); We've Gotta Get Out Of This Place/I Can't Believe It (Columbia DB7639, 1965); It's My Life/I'm Gonna Change The World (Columbia DB7741, 1965); Inside Looking Out/Outcast (Decca F12332, 1966); Don't Bring Me Down/Cheating (Decca F12407, 1966); See See Rider/Help Me Girl (Decca F12502, 1966); When I Was Young/A Girl Named Sandoz (MGM MGM1340, 1967); Good Times/Ain't That So (MGM MGM1344, 1967); San Franciscan Nights/Gratefully Dead (MGM MGM1359, 1967); Sky Pilot Pt 1/Sky Pilot Pt 2 (MGM MGM1373, 1968).

EPs
The Animals Is Here (Columbia SEG8374, 1964); *Animals* (Columbia SEF8400, 1965); *On The Scene* (Columbia SEG8413, 1965); *The Animals* (Columbia SEG8439, 1965); *The Animals Are Back* (Columbia SEG8452, 1965); *Animal Tracks* (Columbia SEG8499, 1966); *In The Beginning There Was Early Animals* (Decca DFE8643, 1966).

Albums (selective)
The Animals (Columbia 33SX 1669, 1964); *Animal Tracks* (Columbia 33SX 1708, 1965); *The Most Of The Animals* (Columbia SX6035, 1966); *Animalisms* (Decca LK4797, 1966); *Winds of Change*(MGM C8052 [mono] CS8052 [stereo], 1967).

THE GREAT MUSICIANS

Bill Bruford

Above: Bill Bruford playing with Yes (with bass-player Chris Squires on the right) shortly before his departure to King Crimson. Overleaf: Bruford pounds out the rhythm on the roto-toms as he leads his own group Bruford.

Few reputations are as well-deserved as that accorded to Bill Bruford as one of the finest drummers in rock. Since the late Sixties he has been involved with some of the most interesting rock bands to emerge from the UK music scene, and his formidable talents have made a durable contribution to every group of musicians fortunate enough to gain his services.

Following a very short (three-gig) spell with blues band Savoy Brown, Bruford co-founded the rock group Yes in 1968. From the outset he was determined to make his mark in the band, refusing to be tied down as a mere time-keeper. Although by his own later standards the playing on the first few Yes LPs was fairly conventional, there was a surprising confidence and authority in his work – as can be heard in the sharp pertinent fills on 'Astral Traveller' and the exhilarating triplet introduction to 'Then', both from the 1970 album *Time And A Word*.

Bruford's last two records with Yes, *Fragile* (1971) and *Close To The Edge* (1972), demonstrated a growing maturity coupled with a developing technique; there was a noticable independence of feet from hands which gave him greater freedom across the kit. The precision of his percussive lines on 'The Fish' from *Fragile* and the interplay between bass drum and the bass guitar of Chris Squire on the title track from *Close To The Edge* marked Bruford out as a drummer to whom the unusual and the difficult were commonplace.

By the summer of 1972 Bruford felt he had learned all he could from Yes and, becoming bored with the rigid structures of the group's compositions, he accepted Robert Fripp's invitation to join King Crimson. As a member of the most adventurous of the group's many line-ups, Bruford found himself playing alongside avant-garde percussionist Jamie Muir who was to have a profound influence on Bruford – an influence he readily admitted: 'He opened me up, made me more courageous. Suddenly it wasn't all drum magazines, but using the instrument to get your character across.'

The distinctive feature of this King Crimson was the combination of brutally tight arrangments set alongside extended passages of improvised ensemble playing. Simple kit drumming was out, as Muir introduced Bruford to a whole bewildering range of percussive devices – marimbas, talking drums, tams, gongs, bells and thunder-sheets. All these were heard on the first album to be recorded by the line-up, *Lark's Tongues In Aspic* (1973). It showcased Bruford's developing style; from the use of flams and ruffs (both ways of 'thickening' the drum beat) on 'Exiles', to the crashing dynamics and irregular time signatures of 'Larks' Tongues In Aspic Part II'.

After the release of *Larks' Tongues* Muir left the group, leaving percussive duties solely to Bruford who convincingly demonstrated his new-found talents on King Crimson's next LP *Starless And Bible Black* (1974). This record featured Bruford extensively on tuned and un-tuned percussion, and his playing was displayed to good effect in the washes of sound on cymbals and bells that created the delicate atmospheric background to 'The Night Watch'. To the surprise of many – including Bruford – Fripp disbanded King Crimson in the summer of 1974. A last studio album *Red* was released later in the year which saw Bruford and the rest of the band running through some intriguingly sophisticated heavy-metal routines.

The next few years saw Bruford working with a wide range of acts including Roy Harper's Trigger, Genesis, Gong, National Health and UK before forming his own group called Bruford. This marked a radical change in Bruford's career: now a band leader, he was deeply involved in compositional duties as well as filling the drum stool. He also had the freedom to play the music he liked with the musicians of his choice: with a nucleus of Dave Stewart (keyboards), Jeff Berlin (bass) and Allan Holdsworth (guitar) the Bruford group brought out *Feels Good To Me* in 1978.

Bruford's own playing on *Feels Good To Me* (which, incidentally, featured the unusual musical pairing of singer Annette Peacock with trumpeter Kenny Wheeler) saw a change in style towards a relaxed jazz-rock feel. This stylistic move was paralleled by a change of drum equipment, away from a fairly conventional kit (plus supplementary percussion) to a set-up that made extensive use of roto-toms which provided the harsh percussive sound that was a feature of this group.

Two more studio albums followed before Robert Fripp again asked Bruford to join him in a resurrected King Crimson in 1981. If the music of Bruford had marked a departure in style for its drummer, then the approach to the new King Crimson was even more so. Dispensing with ride cymbal and hi-hat (both previously an integral part of his and most other drummer's equipment) Bruford concentrated on creating 'blocks of drumming'. The function normally taken by the ride cymbal was given to small tubular drums known as octobans which give a high-pitched dry sound and do not interfere with the guitar sound (as the ride cymbal does so often). The hi-hat was replaced by a second, electronic, bass drum which gives an effect somewhere between a bass and snare drum. The rest of the kit was a mixture of roto-toms and electronic drums which provided the quite distinctive tone that could be heard on the new King Crimson's debut LP, *Discipline* (1981).

Throughout his long and varied progress as a rock drummer Bill Bruford has been distinguished from the vast majority of other drummers by his modesty of approach and his willingness to learn and improve through his interaction with other musicians. Bruford has always refused to be a mere time-keeper; similarly he has not fallen into the trap of being a noisy, extrovert showman with little regard for the music itself. Consistently inventive, Bruford's approach to his craft has gained him a discerning and ever-increasing following as well as the respect and admiration of his fellow-musicians.

ADRIAN GILBERT

THE HISTORY OF
ROCK